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# SERIAL WORLD



- ★ SATURDAY MATINEE SPY HUNTERS OF WORLD WAR II
- ★ THE BATMAN    ★ SERIAL NEWS    ★ SERIAL MARQUEE
- ★ ROCKETMAN    ★ BEHIND THE CLIFF    ★ A LOOK AT  
HANGING SCENES    SOUND SERIALS
- ★ REMEMBERING ROY BARCROFT    ★ REEL BOOKS



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# SERIAL WORLD



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ISSUE . . . .**

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THE BATMAN  
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ROCKETMAN  
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**REMEMBERING  
ROY BARCROFT  
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MARQUEE  
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**SATURDAY  
MATINEE SPY  
HUNTERS  
OF WORLD WAR  
II  
★ ★ ★**

**A LOOK AT THE  
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BEATRICE ROBERTS, LARRY "BUSTER" CRABBE AND CHARLES MIDDLETON IN: FLASH GORDON'S TRIP TO MARS — 1938

*This was our original cover back in 1974 when SERIAL WORLD made its debut.*

# SERIAL WORLD

VOL. 1. NO. 1

A Quarterly publication dedicated to the motion picture serial

CONTRIBUTIONS: — We are always looking for interesting material on the serial genre. Articles, photos, etc., are welcome, but please enclose a self addressed stamped envelope for their return.

AD RATES — While we will run all types of ads we would like those related to the SERIAL subject matter.

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## SERIAL SHOWCASE

BY JEFF WALTON  
EDITOR-SERIAL WORLD  
SPECIAL NOTE



\*\*\*\*\*

*YOU are looking at a re-printed edition of SERIAL WORLD) with the exact features which appeared in our original tabloid paper copy in 1974. We sold out of issue one nearly six years ago and the demand for back issues gave Norm Kietzer and I the idea to re-print our earlier issues so that you fans can have more of a complete SW collection. As we start our re-print series, I would like to thank my publisher, Mr. Norman Kietzer for all his great support, help and most of all trust and friendship all these many years. Without Norm there would be no SERIAL WORLD. In the months to come we will attempt to reproduce all of our early issues of SERIAL WORLD which have sold out.*

Welcome to **SERIAL WORLD**. Like you, I've always had a deep love for the motion picture chapterplay. Some were good, some weren't. But they all kept us coming back for more and still do. In **SERIAL WORLD** we hope to bring you back into the world of cliffhangers in many different ways. As you can see with this issue we have many different features. With your help and response we will improve.

We at **SERIAL WORLD** are well aware of the success and outstanding work that "TEMI" has done for the serial field. It ranks in our book as one of the greatest publications ever put together on the chapterplays. Not only do we praise "TEMI" we will continue to push it every chance we get.

**SERIAL WORLD** will go in other directions. We hope to bring you with each issue something new and different. We will always strive to bring you new and unique stories and most of all many never before seen PHOTOS. How many times have you seen articles on serials with the same stock shots?

I hope after you've read through this issue that you'll drop me a line as to mistakes, suggestions, likes, dislikes, etc. We will have a letter section and will print some of the best material we receive.

Last but not least I would like to thank, and I mean really thank the following people for their time and effort in making the first copy of **SERIAL WORLD** a reality. These men know their serials and it's a pleasure to have them on hand as "ASSOCIATE EDITORS," ERIC HOFFMAN — one of the greatest authorities on the serials in the world today. GREG JACKSON JR. — a serial fan in every respect. CHARLES McCLEARY — who's great article will surely create quite a stir. JIM HITT — who is just now getting into it. And a big thank you to all our subscribers and advertisers who took a chance with us this first issue. I hope we haven't let you down. With luck you'll see us again around Mid-March. Increasing postal rates have forced us to increase our prices to \$1.00 a copy.

I hope **SERIAL WORLD** will really start the "SERIAL FANDOM" movement off with a might leap.

# THE BATMAN



A COLUMBIA SUPER SERIAL — 1943  
WRITTEN FOR SERIAL WORLD BY ERIC HOFFMAN  
15 THRILL PACKED CHAPTERS



THE DEVIL? NOPE, IT'S "THE BATMAN" —  
(LEWIS WILSON)

National Periodicals  
© Columbia Pictures

COLUMBIA PICTURES  
presents  
'THE BATMAN'

Directed by LAMBERT HILLIER  
Screenplay: VICTOR MCLEOD, LESLIE SWABACKER,  
HARRY FRASER  
Based on the BATMAN magazine feature in DETECTIVE  
COMICS & BATMAN magazines  
Produced by RUDOLPH C. FLOTHOW  
Music: LEE ZAHLER

**CAST**  
LEWIS WILSON as BATMAN — BRUCE WAYNE  
DOUGLAS CROFT as ROBIN — DICK GRAYSON  
J. CARROL NAISH as DR. DAKA  
SHIRLEY PATTERSON as LINDA PAGE  
WILLIAM C. AUSTIN as ALFRED  
CHARLES WILSON as CAPT. ARNOLD  
CHARLES MIDDLETON as KEN COLTON  
ROBERT FISKE as FOSTER  
GUS GLASSMIRE as MARTIN WARREN  
MICHAEL VALLON as PRESTON  
JOHN MAXWELL as SAM FLETCHER  
KARL HACKETT as WALLACE  
TED OLIVER as MARSHALL

GEORGE CHESEBRO as BARNARD (1)  
STANLEY PRICE as HENCHMAN — CHAUFFER (1)  
SAM FLINT as DR. BORDEN  
FRANK SHANNON as DR. HAYDEN (ZOMBIE) (1)  
EARL HODGINS as JOE THE BARKER (1-15)  
I. STANFORD JOLLEY as BRETT (2)  
ANTHONY WARDE as STONE (2)  
GEORGE J. LEWIS as BURKE (5)  
JACK INGRAM as KLEIN (5)  
KENNE DUNCAN as FRED (1st mechanic) (5)  
LYNTON BRENT as JIM BRAMBLE (2nd mechanic) (5)  
TERRY FROST as INTERNE (7)  
TOM LONDON as ANDREWS (8)  
DICK CURTIS as CROFT-SECTION 50 (10)  
LESTER DORR as LAWSON — Plane spy (10)  
EDDIE KANE as BAIL BONDSMAN  
BUD OSBORNE as BROWN, ZOMBIE (14)  
PAT O'MALLEY as a Cop (15)

Narrated by KNOX MANNING EPISODES:

1. THE ELECTRICAL BRAIN
2. THE BAT'S CAVE
3. MARK OF THE ZOMBIES
4. SLAVES OF THE RISING SUN
5. THE LIVING CORPSE
6. POISON PERIL
7. THE PHONEY DOCTOR
8. LURED BY RADIUM
9. THE SIGN OF THE SPHINX
10. FLYING SPIES
11. A NIPPONESE TRAP
12. EMBERS OF EVIL
13. 8 STEPS DOWN
14. THE EXECUTIONER STRIKES
15. DOOM OF THE RISING SUN

## AND NOW THE BATMAN

A COLUMBIA SUPER SERIAL — 1943  
WRITTEN FOR SERIAL WORLD BY ERIC HOFFMAN  
15 THRILL PACKED CHAPTERS!

### CHAPTER 1: THE ELECTRICAL BRAIN

In the huge mansion standing outside Gotham City, millionaire Bruce Wayne and his ward Dick Grayson share an incredible secret. On the surface, they look like anyone you could meet, but in reality they are Batman and Robin, the mysterious masked and caped costumed crime-fighters. In their hidden crime-fighting headquarters, The Bat's Cave, existing under the house, Batman and Robin plan their campaigns against the forces of the underworld and enemies of freedom and democracy. Only Alfred, their loyal butler and chauffer shares their secret. At present, the Batman and Robin have been waging a crusade against an outbreak of sabotage threatening to cripple our country's defenses in its war against the German-Japan forces. While on a routine lead that leads to the capture of some members of the notorious Collins gang, Batman hears one thug threaten that 'Dr. Daka will take care of you.' The thugs, tied, are left on a street corner as Batman phones the police that he has a 'package' for them.

The following day, Bruce and Dick join Bruce's attractive fiancee Linda Page. They're going with her to state prison to meet her uncle, Martin Page, who is being



released after serving a sentence for an unmentioned trouble. The trio knows it will do the old man good to see people who still have faith in him. Besides, America has need for Warren's talents; prior to his imprisonment, Martin Warren was one of the country's foremost industrial experts. However, agents of a spy ring, led by Foster, an old acquaintance of Warren, pick him up ahead of the Wayne car. Warren, realizing he has been tricked, finds he is unable to escape. Bruce, Dick and Linda, learning of the earlier pickup, has Alfred drive in pursuit. The enemy car manages to elude the Wayne vehicle when, through manipulation of some special controls, the license plate of the spy vehicle changes, and a gas is released that changes the car's coloring. With the possibility that Martin Warren might be kidnapped by the spy ring now a fact, Bruce resolves to find Linda's uncle no matter what.

Meanwhile, Foster and his henchmen drive into a section of Gotham City known as 'Little Tokyo' due to its former Japanese inhabitants, now moved from the area for security reasons. The thugs stop by an amusement-park type exhibit called the CAVE OF HORRORS and, with Martin Warren their 'guest' ride in one of the cars into the tunnel. Warren is confronted by grim tableaux of horrors, particularly Japanese soldiers torturing and tormenting helpless American prisoners. The car stops at an 'exhibit' of two cavemen, one standing over the other with a club. However, the two exhibits are actually guards protecting a secret entrance in the rock wall of the cave. Foster and his men, after going through an identification routine, go through an opening door, Warren with them.

With the wall, Warren is confronted by a bizarre sight; a large ornately decorated room, furnished in Oriental motif, dominated by a huge statue with an incense burner, and a conference table. Around it are four Americans, and at the head is a Japanese, whose face bears all the cunning and treachery of the enemy America is fighting. With the aura of an evil reptile, the Japanese presents himself to Warren as Dr. Daka. Daka is a special agent for Hirohito, Emperor of Japan, here in America to help prepare our country for conquest by the New Order of the Axis. The four men are members of what Daka calls 'The League of the New Order,' American quislings all, men who had been in one form of industry or another but had let dishonesty take over. They are Preston, Morrison, Fletcher and Wallace. All that was needed to make the 'League' complete was an industrialist. Warren was selected for this dubious honor. But, the old man, although having been sent to prison by his country, refuses to join the sinister group, stoutly maintaining his devotion to the United States. Daka coldly informs Warren that he has ways of securing a man's help, not necessarily torture.

With that statement, Daka uses a microphone to summon a man whom Warren recognizes as a former gardener. However, the man is now virtually a mindless robot, controlled by the microphone due to a special helmet and wire attachment connected to his spine. Daka has a whole group of these 'zombies' and could add Warren to their ranks. Foster and his men take Warren to Daka's laboratory where Warren is injected with truth-serum and made to reveal a supply of vital radium kept at the Gotham City Hospital. Daka requires the radium for a weapon that could spell our country's destruction.

The device is a ray-gun, kind of a miniature atom smasher. Requiring only a small amount of radium to operate, the device's range, however, is limited. Daka

demonstrates what the gun can do by blasting a hunk of concrete to sand-like rubble. With more radium, bigger and more powerful radium guns could be made. With such devices the Axis could defeat America and her allies with horrifying ease. Foster is to use the radium gun to get the radium kept in the hospital in the office of Dr. Borden.

With one of his men and a zombie, formerly Dr. Hayden, a member of the hospital staff, kidnapped sometime ago, enter the hospital, while Crane, another gunman, waits in an alley next to the hospital in a 'laundry truck.' Bruce and Dick happen to drive by the hospital on their way to see Linda, who works there, and recognize the spies. Alfred is ordered to drive into an alley. The two proceed to change to the identities of Batman and Robin.

Inside the hospital, Foster and his men break into Dr. Borden's office where Linda is working. Borden enters and recognizes the former Dr. Hayden, but is murdered by the zombie under Daka's remote control. Linda faints at this, and Foster blasts open the wall safe where the radium is stored. The radium, dropped down the laundry chute, is picked up by Crane, who drives. However, Foster and his two companions are confronted by Batman and Robin, who crash in through the window on their ropes.

The spies are pursued to the hospital roof where Batman and Robin slug it out with them. As Batman is almost a victim of the combined forces of the Zombie and Foster, Daka, fearing the inquiry of the zombie is captured, orders it, via his remote control unit, with television screen, to step off the roof. The Zombie plunges to his death. Meanwhile, Robin has been knocked out, and Foster and his aide gang up on Batman and push him over the edge of the hospital roof. The Batman hurtles through the air toward the street below!

## CHAPTER 2: THE BAT'S CAVE

Hurling down toward the street, Batman crashes onto a painter's scaffolding, which breaks his fall. He heads back for the roof, while Robin comes to and the two crime-fighters capture Foster's assistant, while Foster manages to escape. Also collected is another prize, the radium gun, left by Foster. Batman carries the unconscious gunman, while Robin, using the radium gun, goes ahead to make sure that there is no ambush.

The spy, blindfolded, soon finds himself in the Bat's Cave. His blindfold removed, he finds himself confronted by the two crime-fighters and flitting shadows of bats. Batman uses the man's fear of the cave, the crimefighters and the bats to get some information. All the spy says is that he got his orders from the House of the Open Door. At the sight of the radium gun, the spy cringes, knowing the weapon's power. Batman and Robin leave the nervous spy to sweat it out awhile, Batman making a grim joke, 'Don't be afraid of my little friends. They don't bite anybody...unless I tell them to.' Left alone, the nervous subversive finds he can't get out of the chamber as the passage is blocked by an iron gate.

Bruce and Dick emerge from the secret entrance in the Wayne living room, an old grandfather's clock, and see Alfred relishing and reading a gruesome mystery novel. As a gag, Bruce blasts a vase near Alfred with the radium gun, shaking up the butler. Later, the form of the spy is left at







police headquarters, bound and gagged with a note identifying him as one of the spies with the seal of the Batman on his forehead.

At his secret hideout, Daka is furious at Foster. 'Because of your stupidity,' he snarls, 'we have lost our most powerful weapon.' They must find someone who knows where it is being kept and Daka already has a suspect in mind; Linda Page.

That day, Linda, lured by a false call supposedly by her uncle, goes to the Blue Parrot club, after calling Bruce and telling him of it, asking him not to go with her. Suspicious, Bruce decides that he and Dick will go to keep an eye on Linda. The girl is lured to a phone booth and gassed, then whisked away by Foster and Crane through a secret panel in the booth. Dick, who has followed Linda and saw her enter the booth, becomes suspicious after Linda is gone. Uncovering a clue leading to an East Side hotel, the two disguise themselves as a bowery derelict and a newsboy, keeping in contact with pocket radio. Dick hawks newspapers in front of the hotel, making a quick profit on the side by selling a paper to Foster, while Bruce checks on a room. Bruce hides then follows Foster. The man enters room 550 and goes through a secret panel into a small lab where Linda is being kept prisoner by Crane and two gunmen, Squint-Eye and Miles. She has been questioned regarding the radium gun and new supplies of radium.

Bruce and Dick have become Batman and Robin and spot some phone cables in the alley by the spy's room. Climbing up by their ropes, the two then swing into the room and engage the spies in a slug-fest. A couple of acid bottles are smashed and the deadly fumes fill the room. The spies escape, closing the panel door, trapping Batman, Robin and Linda inside. Robin is ordered to get out through the window, while Batman picks up the unconscious Linda and climbs to the phone cables and starts walking them like a wire-walker. Robin, down in the alley below, watches anxiously. On the roof of the hotel, Foster sees this and, getting an idea, breaks off a live wire from a terminal pole and touches it to the cables, starting an electrical flame racing toward the Batman. As the costumed hero, carrying Linda, nears the ropes hooked on to the cables, the electrical flame catches up with him and he and Linda fall, plunging to the alley hundreds of feet below!

### **CHAPTER 3: THE MARK OF THE ZOMBIES**

The Batman manages to grab the rope connected to the cable and saves himself and Linda. He slides to the ground and he and Robin take Linda to the hospital.

At his hideout, Dr. Daka is furious at Foster for allowing Linda to escape. But other matters are more important. Not only must the Radium Gun be recovered, but the saboteurs must learn when a supply train, carrying vital equipment to an Army base, is to leave the rail station. Daka, getting an idea, once more asks Martin Warren if he will join Daka's Council of the New Order; Warren refuses again. With a sibilant 'too bad,' Daka orders his agents to take Warren into the laboratory where Warren is strapped in to a chair, while Daka dons heavy rubber gloves, then lowers a weird, helmet-like device on Warren's head. The fiendish Oriental throws a switch and amidst crackling and flashing electrical machinery, Warren undergoes a change inside the helmet until he is now a member of Daka's horde of zombies. With Warren completely under his control, Daka prepares the next step in recovering the radium gun. Back at the Wayne mansion,

in the meantime, Bruce, Dick and Alfred are trying to figure out a means of bringing the gang into the open. They decide to use the ray gun as bait by placing an ad in the paper.

The following day, in Little Tokyo, Crane, one of Daka's men, goes through the Cave of Horrors ride to the secret entrance to Daka's lab, and tells Daka that the supply train for the Army base is leaving at 10:00 p.m. that evening. A few moments later, Foster shows Daka a newspaper with an ad describing the radium gun, giving an address and phone number. The quisling explains that he has made an appointment, while Daka suspects that the ad is probably a trap by the Batman and suggest a counter-move.

That evening, at an office building, Batman and Robin finish disguising a nervous Alfred in false beard and moustache. Robin's stationed outside the building, while the Batman is waiting behind the venetian blinds on the window ledge. Spotting Foster walking into the building, Robin follows, but is knocked out from behind by Crane. Inside the office, Alfred is stalling an impatient Foster. Foster pulls a gun, calling in some henchmen. Crane, meanwhile, prowling about the roof, almost spots Batman. Robin regains consciousness, and goes after Crane. He attacks the thug and knocks him through a skylight into the office where Foster has Alfred covered. Batman and Robin break in and a fight ensues. While Alfred gets to a phone and in his panic starts yelling for Scotland Yard, before getting the police. The tide starts turning against Batman and Robin when Alfred manages to get a gun dropped in the fight and starts shooting with his eyes closed! The wild shots panic the thugs, who flee, while Batman and Robin get the gun away from Alfred. As police sirens are heard, Alfred is sent home while Batman and Robin go after the heavies in order to stop their sabotage of the vital supply train.

Foster and Crane have set up a special bomb on the railroad trestle, while Miles and Squint-Eye are standing guard. Batman and Robin arrive and start slugging it out with the heavies; Batman manages to knock Foster out before he can connect the detonator to the bomb. Squint-Eye is knocked off the trestle, while Miles escapes. Crane, knocked out in the fight, hurls a wrench at Batman while the masked man and Foster slug it out. The wrench finds its mark, and Batman falls onto the tracks, out cold. Foster and Crane flee, while Robin intercepts them and is battling the heavies. The supply train comes thundering down the tracks of the railroad trestle, rushing towards the unconscious Batman!

### **CHAPTER 4: SLAVES OF THE RISING SUN**

Robin manages to drive off Crane and Foster in time to get to Batman and push him off the trestle, moments before the train reaches the spot where he was lying, and jumps off as well. Both land in a river below. The saboteurs watch, frustrated, as the supply train continues on, unscratched; but they are sure that Batman was killed by the train. Batman and Robin, meanwhile, make their way to shore and head back for home.

At his council room, Daka is busy dropping hunks of meat from a basket into a pit of huge alligators. Holding the basket is the zombieized Martin Warren. The four quisling members of the League of the New Orders (Marshall, Preston, Fletcher and Wallace) enter as Daka covers the pit with a trap door; all are expectantly awaiting to hear the news of Foster's success in destroying the train.

A celebration is in order, as Daka has one of his underlings bring Saki for five. Foster arrives and reports the failure of the train sabotage attempt. Daka is stunned, since he devised the bomb himself. Foster tells of the interference of the Batman; however, he is sure that the masked man was eliminated. Daka, enraged at Foster's bungling; threatens his henchman with a horrible fate, but the gangster, showing what seems to be a patriotic streak, pulls a gun on his former master. Covering Daka and his quisling associates, Foster tells Daka what he really thinks of the New Order, and that it is evident who is really going to win the war. Daka, in a desperate attempt, grabs his special microphone and summons the zombified Warren and Brown. Foster kills Brown, while Daka stops Warren, rather than lose him as well. Foster starts backing out of the room with a scornful 'so, long suckers,' when Daka suddenly presses a hidden switch and Foster is plunged into the alligator pit. Daka and his Council look down as Foster's screams are cut off, leaving the quislings with an object lesson of the price they will pay if they fail their 'master,' Dr. Daka.

Determined to get more radium to build another radium gun, Daka makes plans to get at the one person who knows when it will leave by armored car, Linda Page! A plan has already begun hatching in the evil Jap's mind.

Linda receives a call from a 'fortune teller' who says that he has information for Linda regarding her missing uncle. Linda contacts Bruce, who is at work in his crime-lab, and tells him. Bruce fakes an excuse about going to the polo matches, and Linda hangs up angrily. Determined to keep an eye on the girl, Bruce and Dick have Alfred drive them to the mystic, Swami Dhar. When the mystic orders them out, Bruce knocks him out and dons the man's robes and turban, which Bruce finds contains a type of radio hookup.

At his headquarters, Daka is informed by one of his men that Linda is almost in the area of the Swami's setup. Daka trips the radio connection to the fortune-telling parlor. There, Bruce and Dick hear the buzz of the radio setup, and Bruce plugs in a special connection. The two hear the voice of their unknown adversary, with Wayne pretending to be Swami Dhar. Bruce sends Dick back to the car to wait with Alfred. Dick spots Linda in time to escape being spotted.

When Linda enters the Swami's establishment, she sees Bruce, in the Swami's outfit, sitting in the shadows. Bruce, as the Swami, tells the girl that she is in great danger and orders her to leave. Linda walks out of the consultation room, but is seized by a heavy from behind some curtains and taken out through a secret passage. Bruce joins Alfred and Dick outside and hears that Linda never came out of the shop. Rushing back inside the building, the group finds the hidden door. Inside, they discover Linda, unconscious. Coming to, Linda notes that the schedule of the armored truck with the radium is gone. Bruce orders Alfred to take Linda to safety; then, as Batman, Bruce calls the police, saying that he has a 'package on ice, but it's liable to spoil,' referring to the unconscious Swami. Bruce and Dick go to their car and drive for the route being taken by the armored truck.

The armored car has already been taken over by Daka's saboteurs, with Crane and Morgan in the back. The heavies spot a pursuing car with Batman and Robin inside, and start firing at the vehicle with shotguns. Batman has Robin pull alongside the truck and transfers to the truck with the radium gun in his hand. Climbing onto the roof, Batman starts blasting a hole in the roof with the gun. The

gas resulting from the gun's work renders Crane and Morgan unconscious. Batman then gets to the cab of the truck and is battling with the driver for control of the vehicle. The truck weaves out of control and plunges off the road, going over an embankment, smashing to bits on the rocks below with the Batman inside the vehicle!

## CHAPTER 5: THE LIVING CORPSE

Batman manages to knock out the driver and leap from the truck before it goes over the cliff with the saboteurs aboard. Robin drives up in the car as Batman is about to make his way down to the wreck to check on the spies and retrieve the ray gun.

In the Council room, Dr. Daka is addressing his men. Even though the Batman interfered, Daka considers the death of the heavies in the truck fitting reward for their failure. But the radium gun must still be recovered. A short-wave radio message comes for Daka, whom we learn is a royal Prince of Japan, telling him that a 'package' is to be delivered at Smugglers Rocks with some vital information in it. Realizing this means new orders from Tokyo, Daka sends his men to pick up the 'package' while he makes a call to the Hills Brothers' Mortuary.

Daka's men return through a hidden tunnel with a coffin. Ordering the heavies to take it to the laboratory, Daka opens the coffin to disclose the body of a Japanese soldier, apparently dead. Daka knows the man is in a state of suspended animation and, with his electrical devices, revives the man enough so he can deliver his message. The Lockwood Aircraft Company has developed a new type of airplane motor, and Daka is to get it for Japan. Before dying, the soldier gives Daka an object from within his shirt, then expires.

At the same moment, at the Wayne mansion, Bruce gets a special letter with a stamp pasted on strangely. Removing what turns out to be a blank piece of paper, Wayne, with Alfred and Dick watching, runs it through some chemicals. A message emerges, with orders from the Federal Government, ordering Wayne to guard the new Lockwood motor. Bruce has become an operative for the government, whose representative apparently knows of his Batman identity.

At Daka's hideout, the Japanese is showing his men the 'object' the soldier gave him. It's a plan on microfilm of the Lockwood plant. The question is, how to get in. At that moment, outside at the CAVE OF HORRORS booth, two workers from the plant, Joe Brammell and his friend Ken, are being put into one of ride cars by Joe, the barker. The barker then phones ahead to tell Daka of the two workers. Inside the cave, the car stops as Daka emerges from his secret door by the Cave-Man exhibit. Thinking that Daka is part of the 'show,' Joe and Ken enter into the council room where they are seized by Daka's zombies and taken into the lab. There, they are zombified; Daka plans to use his new 'recruits' to steal the plane with the new motor aboard.

Later, at the plant, Bruce and Dick, disguised as workers, are near the plane. Bruce sneaks into the cargo compartment, while Dick watches things. Under Daka's control, Joe and Ken knock out the pilots of the ship in the fight, during which Dick spots them and is knocked out as well. Donning the pilots' outfits, the two zombies take off in the plane. Regaining consciousness, Dick radios Bruce via pocket transmitter, warning him what has happened.



Bruce has already donned his Batman costume, and emerges from the back of the plane heading for the cockpit. The plane is flying smoothly to Pelican Island, where Daka's agents will take over.

But, through his telescreen, Daka spots Batman entering the cockpit and orders the zombies to attack the masked man. Dick, meanwhile, has alerted the authorities to the plane theft, and anti-aircraft batteries are alerted. The plane is spotted and anti-aircraft guns open fire. Inside the plane, Batman and the two zombies are slugging it out. One anti-aircraft shell sets the plane afire in the tail section. Pilotless, the ship plunges to earth and crashes in the midst of a rocky area in a mass of ruins with Batman aboard!

## CHAPTER 6: POISON PERIL

As the plane crashes, a squad of soldiers rush to the scene. A few moments after the crash, the Batman emerges, miraculously unhurt; the two zombies are pulled out by the masked man who begins to examine the strange helmets they are wearing. He hears the soldiers approaching and rushes off.

At Daka's hideout, the Japanese madman is trying, unsuccessfully, to re-establish contact with his zombies. Daka is now determined to destroy the Batman, no matter what the cost. However, his first concern is to contact the Jap submarine that is cruising in costal waters, warning it that it is dangerous to be in the area. However, a few moments after the sub ends contact with Daka, it is shelled and destroyed by a US destroyer. The news hits the papers, and Daka is enraged when he reads it. Ready to start his campaign to find out who the Batman is, Daka thinks of Linda Page and her friends, especially Bruce Wayne. Could it be possible, he wonders, if Bruce and Batman are one and the same?

Shrugging off the idea as preposterous (Bruce is not exactly noted as a man of action), he orders Klein, one of his henchmen, to get into Linda's apartment and plant a hidden microphone in the girl's apartment in the guise of a telephone repairman.

At Bruce's house, Alfred is having his own problems; Linda is there, wanting to see Bruce, who is out as Batman. Alfred is desperately trying to stall the girl, and almost has a heart attack when he sees the secret entrance in the clock begin to open. He manages to block it off as Bruce, who somehow managed to get back from the plane wreck, and Dick enter the room. When she sees them, Linda tells the duo that she received a call from Rex Colton, an old friend of Wayne's and Linda's. Colton had told the girl that he had uncovered something important and will meet her the following day at the girl's apartment. Bruce and Dick agree to come along as well.

At Linda's apartment the following day, Colton, a lean, bearded Westerner, tells Bruce, Dick and Linda that he has become the owner of a mine that is loaded with radium-bearing pitchblende. Colton plans to let the government use the mine, knowing of the wartime shortage of radium. Daka and his men hear this through the hidden microphone. The evil Daka quips, 'Mr. Colton seems to understand our problem.' Colton is about to tell his friends of the mine's location, but Bruce cautions him not to. However, Colton goes to his desk for a map to show the group, and accidentally drops some papers. Dick, bending down to pick them up, bumps his head on something under the table and discovers the hidden microphone. He rips it out and hides it.

Daka knows what has happened and orders Burke and Klein to go with Fletcher, his chief lieutenant, to visit Colton's apartment and force the prospector to reveal the location of the mine. Colton is attacked that night by the three heavies, but Bruce and Dick, as Batman and Robin, appear, having decided to keep an eye on Colton. They drive off the heavies, but the thugs escape. A short time later, Colton is being treated by a doctor and an attendant. Bruce and Dick show up to keep an eye of their friend till morning. That day, Colton phones Bruce, telling him that Martin Warren called, asking him to meet him at a defense plant. Bruce, suspecting a trap, tells Colton to wait. He'll go down to check if everything is all right, then give Colton the go-ahead via phone call.

With this, Bruce and Dick turn toward Alfred, who backs away in terror as he defines what his two employers have in mind. After trying, futilely, to talk them out of their plan, Alfred reluctantly agrees to be made up as Colton and go in the man's stead to the factory. Alfred arrives in a cab, as 'Colton,' while Batman and Robin watch from a distance in their car. Entering the factory, 'Colton' is met by Burke and Klein and Marshall who pretend to show the man around the various machines, particularly a vat of a chemical that could dissolve a man in seconds.

The thugs drop their affability and demand that 'Colton' reveal where the radium mine is. As they start to work on 'Colton,' part of the false beard comes loose. Batman and Robin swing in from the window on ropes, and a fight ensues. Alfred is knocked into another room, with Robin soon following. Burke locks the heavy iron door, while Batman slugs it out with Marshall. During the fight, an electrical switch has been pulled, causing short circuits and an electrical fire. Several gunshots have been fired, some of them hitting the vat of acid. A thin stream of the chemical heads for the fire. Batman is knocked out and the thugs, seeing the chemical streaming to the flames clear out of the factory. The chemical hits the fire and a gigantic explosion occurs, causing the roof of the factory to come crashing on the area where the Batman lies unconscious, burying him alive!

## CHAPTER 7: THE PHONEY DOCTOR

The explosion also blasts open the iron door to the room where Robin and Alfred are prisoners. They find the Batman, partially buried under some of the debris, since he was protected by the vat itself, which took most of the avalanche. Alfred is bewildered as to how the thugs knew it was a trap, but he soon realizes when he finds that half his 'beard' is gone. With this attempt a failure, the Batman realizes that the sabotage gang will make another try at kidnapping Rex Colton. Batman, Robin and Alfred decide to head for the police station and try and do some checking as to who their opponents were. At the station, with the aid of Chief Arnold, they see the picture of the leader of the thugs. Arnold identifies the man as Sam Fletcher, a former civil engineer who was sent to prison a year ago.

Meanwhile, in Colton's room, the old prospector is starting to arm himself just in case there's another attack. The male nurse looks on as the westerner straps on a six-shooter, and then puts onto his arm a strange attachment holding a small derringer. This gimmick is referred to by Colton as his "little Black Widow." It enables him to have



the derringer in his hand at the flick of his wrist, making the fastest draws look mild by comparison. Colton then gets rid of the nurse and starts gearing himself for battle. However, there is a knock at the door. Cautiously, gun in hand, Colton opens it and in walks a man identifying himself as Dr. Franklin from the hospital. In actuality it's Fletcher, Daka's chief lieutenant. Pretending to have been sent by Linda Page to give the old man a check-up, Fletcher gets him to cooperate, seating him in an easy chair. He then has the old man start to open his mouth for a thermometer, but instead, claps a drugged handkerchief over the man's face. Within a few moments, Colton is out cold. Fletcher rushes to the room window and raises and lowers the blind three times.

This is a signal to Burke and Kline, who are outside, disguised as hospital orderlies and driving a fake ambulance. Seeing the signal, they spring into action. Within a few minutes, by-standers, see the bogus hospital men loading a stretcher, carrying the unconscious Rex Colton into the ambulance and then driving off. A few minutes later, Bruce Wayne and Dick Grayson arrive, and go into Colton's room only to find him gone. They suspect something happened, for Colton's six-shooter is lying on the floor, and Colton never went anywhere without it. They suspect that he was kidnapped and their suspicions are confirmed when they find the drugged handkerchief left carelessly behind by Fletcher. Bruce calls the hotel desk and finds out about the ambulance, but is dismayed to learn that the men didn't say which hospital they were taking Colton to. Now he knows that the sabotage gang

has Colton under their power. But he and Dick aren't without resources, and they head back for their crime lab to give the handkerchief the most thorough going-over of its existence.

In the meantime, Daka's men bring the unconscious Colton into the main council room through a secret panel. Fletcher administers smelling salts, while Daka watches, smiling enigmatically. A few minutes later, Colton is telling Daka that he has all the location maps in a safe deposit box and that he'll never help Daka get the radium mine. Daka informs him that he has ways of convincing Colton to help. He then takes up the special microphone and summons in the zombieized Martin Warren. Seeing his old friend, Colton is astonished, then horrified as he sees what Warren has become. For a further demonstration, Daka has Warren attack Colton, choking the man, calling his new zombie off just in time. Colton is horrified, but pretends cooperation. However, as he gets behind Daka, who is gloating over the victory, he flicks his wrist and his "Black Widow" jumps into his hand. Jamming it into Daka's back he has Daka order his men to drop their guns, and then starts to back out through the secret entrance into the CAVE OF HORRORS front. However, the living member of the cave-man exhibit is on the job and as Colton emerges with Daka a prisoner, he gives the old westerner a hearty clout over the head with his club. Colton is out for the night.

Daka now orders his henchmen Fletcher, Ames, Burke and Kline to go to a building used as a supply station and get certain materials the mad oriental needs. Daka intends



to deal with Colton later.

Meanwhile, Bruce and Dick have been giving the chloroformed handkerchief a thorough goingover with every device they have on hand in their crime laboratory. With the aid of a "black light" device, they have uncovered a laundry mark in Japanese. Bruce recalls that there is a laundry building of that nature on the north side of Gotham City. They decide to go there.

What Bruce and Dick do not know is that the Nakada Laundry, the name of the building, is now deserted due to the absence of its former occupants. However, Dr. Daka is using it now as a storehouse. The two crime fighters arrive at the building and are starting toward it, when they see something that causes them to jump back into the shadows.

What they see is Daka's four men entering the building. As soon as the thugs enter the building, Bruce and Dick decide, instead of going over the fence, to use the scenic route — the roof. They rush back to their car where they start to don their secret identities of the Batman and Robin.

Inside the building, on the third floor, Fletcher, Burke, Kline, and Ames are going through the various crates and boxes looking for the materials Dr. Daka sent them to get. Suddenly, their search is interrupted when Batman and Robin appear before them, having dropped through the skylight. The fight that ensues is wild and wooly with Ames knocked out of action for the moment, and Batman taking on Burke and Fletcher, while Robin has to contend with Kline.

Robin is knocked out, as Ames regains his equilibrium, and all four of the gangsters group together and gang up on the Batman. They lift him up and hurl him over the small guard fence in front of the elevator shaft, which is empty. Batman plunges to the bottom, and crashes to the ground unconscious. A diabolical thought crosses Fletcher's mind, as he pulls the switch setting the huge, heavy elevator into action. However, the burglar alarm has been set off during the fight, and the saboteurs have to make a run for it, not being able to see what happens to the unconscious Batman. The huge elevator comes down upon the unconscious figure of the Batman, apparently ending his career for good by crushing the masked crime-fighter to death!

## **CHAPTER 8: LURED BY RADIUM**

As the elevator descends upon Batman's unconscious form, Robin regains consciousness on the second floor and rushes over to the control switch, stopping the elevator only a scant distance above Batman's form. He rushes downstairs and helps the masked crime-fighter from the elevator shaft. The two hear police sirens in the distance and decide to get away before the police arrive and start asking questions.

Meanwhile, at Bruce Wayne's home, Linda has Alfred in a state of nerves as she constantly bombards him with questions as to Bruce's whereabouts or else starts planning to go to Colton's mine herself. Alfred is visibly relieved when Bruce and Dick enter the room in their normal identities. Linda tells Bruce that she feels that the attacks on Colton and the radium mine are in some way connected with her uncle's disappearance. She wants Bruce to go with her to the location of Ken Colton's radium mine, but Bruce seems to be hesitant about it at first. As Linda is starting to berate him for his "laziness" Bruce decides that he, Dick and Alfred will go with her, as soon as they pack the trailer.

However, at Daka's HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, things are not going too well for Colton. He still defies Daka, refusing to tell him where the radium mine is located. Daka is giving him one last chance before he uses his most drastic method: he will make a zombie of Rex Colton. Colton still refuses, saying that the zombie treatment might not even make him tell the mine's location.

Daka has Fletcher place the helmet-device on Colton, while he dons his heavy rubber gloves, and stands by at the controls. However, he doesn't set off the full zombieizing treatment, but instead inflicts enough pain on Colton to make the man apparently give up. Colton is apparently ready to cooperate in order to avoid any more agony such as he has just experienced. He will lead Daka's men to his radium mine.

Later, in a mountainous area, a car containing Burke, Fletcher, Kline, Ames, and two other thugs, stops at "Steve's Indian Trading Post," for water and then asks the location of Colton's cabin. Colton himself is hidden in the back of the car by the thugs. Burke fills the radiator with water, and then drives off. They soon arrive at the mine by taking a fork in the road, and Colton, apparently cowed by his harrowing experience in Daka's laboratory, leads them in. The mine itself is a weird place, almost from another world, filled with stalagmites and stalactites. The gloom is pierced by a lantern held by one of the thugs.

Meanwhile, Bruce, Dick, Linda and Alfred have arrived at Colton's cabin, after getting directions from the trading post. Linda and Alfred wait in the cabin, while Bruce and Dick decide to do some scouting around. As soon as they are gone, the two decide to change into their Batman and Robin identities, especially after spotting the thugs' car at the mine entrance.

During this, Colton has knocked the lantern from the hands of Burke, and while Burke and Ames attack each other by mistake, Colton escapes by a trap door to the cabin, scaring Alfred and Linda out of their wits when he knocks over the table. He tells Linda about the "claim-jumpers" and sets up his surprise for them. He's gathering sticks of explosive, and returns to the mine to start wiring them to a detonator.

Batman and Robin break in on the thugs as they are looking for Colton in the mine and the fight is on. Colton has finished wiring the detonator, and looks into the mine tunnel, seeing the Batman and Robin fighting the spies. He calls to Batman so that the crime-fighter may get out of the danger zone, but the thugs keep pressing in.

Alfred, in the meantime, has been sent by Linda to the mine to order to get Bruce and Dick, but he runs into two of the thugs who have been sent by Fletcher to check on the cabin. Alfred is captured and marched back to the house, as Linda starts to walk outside. They spot her, and knock the butler out before going after the girl. Linda exits through the trap door with the thugs right behind her. Batman, in the meantime, has disposed of most of the thugs, with Robin's aid, but is attacked by Linda's pursuers.

Colton tries to aid the Batman as the fight waxes furious. Everything seems to be going for Batman, when Colton is knocked onto the detonator, setting off the explosives.

The entire mine is enveloped in a vast explosion, apparently burying not only the criminals, but Linda, Colton, Robin and the Batman in the blast!

## CHAPTER 9: THE SIGN OF THE SPHINX

As Colton falls upon the dynamite plunger, Batman, Robin and Linda escape the blast by hiding under the stairs from the cabin above. Colton and two gunmen are buried under the cave-in, while Fletcher and the others get away. However, Marshall is found still alive, but unconscious. Batman and Robin, after seeing that Linda is alive, but unconscious from the blast, take Marshall and put him, tied and gagged, inside the camper trailer. Alfred, meanwhile, has revived Linda and they discover Colton's passing, while Batman and Robin resume their normal identities and are told of the mine-owners death. They leave for Gotham City with Marshall in the trailer.

At Daka's hideout, the Jap's fury is increased at the loss of the radium mine and Marshall's apparent death. The four survivors try to placate their chief by stating that Batman was also eliminated in the blast. They are ordered to wait at the Sphinx Club, a waterfront cafe hideout, for further orders.

Marshall, meanwhile, has been taken to the Bat's Cave by Batman and Robin where he is questioned by the two crime-fighters. But the thug refuses to talk and is left alone by Batman who feels that the atmosphere of the cave will have its effect. After they have gone, Marshall, who had been tied to a chair, frees himself and starts looking for a way out of the Bat's Cave, only to get slightly lost until he comes upon a telephone. What is a telephone doing in the Bat's Cave? Marshall immediately dials the Sphinx Club, while, unknown to him, Batman and Robin are tracing the call with a huge dial-like device that simulates a telephone dial. Batman checks the number and after learning about the waterfront dive, decides to infiltrate the gang, hoping to get a lead on their unknown master-mind.

With his skill at makeup, Bruce assumes the identity of 'Chuck White' a cheap thug, and tests out his work. Alfred is almost fooled, but Linda, who has come to see Bruce, is taken in completely and storms out, with obvious disapproval of Bruce's 'friend.' Alfred is ordered to take Bruce to the vicinity of the Sphinx Club. 'Chuck' then goes inside and asks Bernie, the owner, for Marshall. Bernie alerts Fletcher and his men and 'Chuck' is sent in. Fletcher and his men demand proof of Chuck's identity and move toward him. Bruce, trapped, draws a gun, pretending to be defying them as White but Bernie appears from behind a secret panel in the wall and knocks the gun out of Bruce's hand.

Robin, however, has been outside the building and, seeing Bruce's predicament, hurls a rock at the lamp in the room, shattering it. Then, using a special flashlight, he shines the bat-signal on the wall. The men think Batman is there and go out to catch him, while Bruce slips away in the dark. Robin, attempting to elude his pursuers, leads them to a moored liner and is pursued aboard by some of the men. Fletcher and some of his other aides are attacked by the Batman who leaps down on them from a building. Robin, outnumbered on the ship, dives over the side into the ocean.

Batman, meanwhile, is knocked out and falls into a cargo net on the dock, under the raised ship's gangplank. Fletcher, hearing police sirens, decides to eliminate the Batman and cuts the rope holding the gangplank up. The gangplank comes crashing down on the unconscious Batman!

## CHAPTER 10: FLYING SPIES

As the huge gangplank comes crashing down upon Batman, the crime-fighter regains consciousness, and rolls out of the way, off the dock. The saboteurs are prevented from going after their enemy by the approach of police sirens, and flee. Batman and Robin climb back onto the docks and rush to their car, driven by Alfred, and leave the dock.

Meanwhile, at the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Daka is alerted to one of his men by the warning buzzer at the entrance to the hideout. Checking via his X-ray viewer, Daka finds it's Fletcher, and lets him in. When Daka finds out that "Chuck White" escaped, he's furious, especially at the discovery of the location of their Sphinx Club headquarters. However, Fletcher explains the appearance of the Batman, and that he killed the crime-fighter personally. For a moment the idea that there might be a group of Batmen, occurs to Daka. But he shrugs it off, snarling that it's a pity that it wasn't Fletcher who was killed in the mine cave-in instead of Marshall. Just then there is a buzz from Daka's agent in "section 50" (Dick Curtis). He is informed that "friends of the League of the New Order" have arranged for a supply of radium to be sent to Daka. Daka is delighted for this will give him material to work on his bigger, and more deadlier radium atom-smasher. Now all they can do is wait for the rendezvous information.

Back at the Bat's Cave, Marshall is still prisoner, defying Batman, who decides to take him to the police. And so, a short-time later, a "package" is delivered to the front of the police station, and Marshall is put in jail. The next morning, at breakfast, Bruce and Dick are given a letter by Alfred. It's from the government, or more specifically, from Bruce's contact Flannagan. Bruce sends Dick to the secret crime-lab to decode the letter. Dick uses the clock secret passage just in time as Linda arrives, furious with Bruce. They had a date last night at the time Bruce was in his "Chuck White" disguise. However, Bruce smooths things over. After Linda leaves, Dick returns with the decoded letter. It warns Bruce about the supply of radium to be sent to Daka, and wants Bruce to stop the shipment. So it's back to "Chuck White" for Bruce.

Meanwhile, Daka has been informed by his "section 50" agent that the government knows of the radium shipment. A new plan is to be put into effect. At the same time, Bruce as Chuck White, enters the Sphinx Club, and is greeted by the owner, who is placated by Bruce's explanation of leaving to avoid the Batman. He waits for Marshall. At that moment, Fletcher walks in, and is informed of Chuck by the club owner. He decides to use Chuck as an agent for the operations of the spy ring. Daka has ordered him to bring new agents to a house on Bell Street for inspection, and Fletcher decides to take Chuck there too.

At the house, Bruce is ushered into a room where he is told to wait. A few moments later, a steel shutter slides over the door, and Bruce is trapped, but he waits. A portrait on the wall arouses his suspicions, and he's right. For behind the portrait, Daka is watching him. Convinced that "Chuck" is a common hoodlum, Dr. Daka orders Fletcher to use the man on the radium pick-up.

In the meantime, the spy on board the passenger plane has been alerted by a coded telegram to use an alternate plan. He's now waiting for the right moment. He will see a flare and drop the radium by parachute.



That night, in an old field, Fletcher, Preston, Burke, Kline and several other agents are waiting, along with "Chuck White." Kline and another man separate with "Chuck" between them. As soon as he is alone, Bruce starts to sneak off, but is confronted by Kline, who suspected him all along. A fight is started, and Bruce escapes, rushing to where Alfred and Robin are waiting, with the Wayne car. A few moments later Bruce and Dick have changed to Batman and Robin.

Preston has lit the flare, and the spy in the plane has dropped the parachute with the radium. At that moment, when the radium lands, Batman and Robin appear, and a wild fight ensues. Robin is knocked out, while Batman throws off his enemies and races for one of the spies' car and takes out for the radium. Kline and Burke start shooting frantically, hitting the tires of the car.

As Batman desperately tries to control the careening car, the vehicle smashes through a guard rail, plunging over a cliff to flaming destruction below with the Batman apparently inside!

### CHAPTER 11: A NIPPONESE TRAP

As the car careens wildly down the road due to the bullet-riddled tire, Batman manages to leap from the vehicle moments before it plunges through the guard rail to flaming destruction on the cliff below. Preston and his men manage to get the parachute carrying the radium, and drive off. In the meantime, Robin regains consciousness and rushes to where Alfred and the Wayne car are waiting. They drive to the site of the crash and pick up Batman. All are worried now that the gang has the radium. What does the mysterious enemy of the United States intend to do with the stolen radium?

At the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Daka waits for the arrival of Preston and Fletcher. The two spies arrive at the CAVE OF HORRORS disguise, and take the ride car to the secret entrance that is guarded by the "Cave-Man." When they are admitted, Daka asks if all went well. He's upset over the news that Batman interfered and that Chuck White tried to pull a double-cross. However, now that Dr. Daka has the radium he can complete the larger radium weapon with more destructive power than man has ever known.

Meanwhile, Batman, or rather Bruce Wayne, is removing his "Chuck White" disguise as he and Dick start to make plans to find out the location of their enemy's hideout. Marshall, one of Daka's chief men, is still in prison, and Batman has an idea. The next day, Dick and Alfred stand beside the Wayne limousine, watching as a policeman takes "Chuck White" into the station. The boy and chauffeur exchange knowing looks. Their plan is working to perfection.

Inside the jail, "Chuck White" is placed in a cell next to the one containing Marshall. After winning the man's confidence, and telling him that he's in jail for "prowling," he tells Marshall a strange story. One place he ran into was loaded with bats, but he says what scared him was one huge bat, almost as big as a man seated at a desk. Marshall knows that this is the Batman, and that "Chuck" must have found the Bat's Cave. He tells "Chuck" that his boss will pay well for information as to where the "Batman" is. And so, "Chuck" is given an address on the old Hill Road to which he should go after he's released from prison.

In the meantime, Dick and Alfred have gone down the

street to see a cheap bail bondsman named Bailey. With the right cash, Bailey gets "Chuck" out later on. However, back at the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Daka is informed by his "Section 50" agent that agents have discovered that "Chuck White" has been arrested. Daka, determined to dispose of this traitor to his evil cause, orders "Plan 5" put into effect. Now it is only a question of waiting.

That night, a truck with the sign "Gotham City Moving Company" waits a few yards down from the police station. A few moments later, "Chuck White" emerges from the jail, and gets in a cab. As the cab drives off, so does the truck, which speeds after the cab, crashing into it, ramming it in a mass of wreckage into the curb, then driving off. As the two thugs, Burke and Kline, drive off, they are sure "Chuck White" is no longer among the living.

However, a short time later at the Wayne house, Alfred and Dick receive a phone call from Bruce. Somehow, he managed to survive the crash, although he received slight injuries. He's calling from a doctor's office, asking them to pick him up. Moments later, the car arrives and Bruce leaps inside. He starts to change to his identity of the Batman. A short time later, he arrives at the Hill Road address with Alfred, and Dick, now in his Robin identity. They see an old building which must have once been a radio station of some sort. However, there is a fence around it with a guard. However, this doesn't thwart our heroes, for they climb right over the fence and make their way to the hideout, or rather "section 50."

Inside the building, Burke and Kline have returned, reported the elimination of Chuck White, but with a refinement of "Plan 5" (running him over in the street). However, Burke is losing in a poker game, while the "Section 50" agent reports to Daka of the elimination of "Chuck." However, Burke decides to go out for a breath of air, and when he opens the door, he is confronted by Batman and Robin, who barge into the room. The wild battle is on, but the odds seem to be turning against Batman and Robin, until Robin gets one of the thugs' guns and holds them off. Batman decides to check the radio room, and is knocked out by the "Section 50" man. He falls against Robin giving the thugs their chance. Batman is thrown into a chair, while Robin is knocked out. Now the thugs have their biggest enemy, the famous Batman, at their mercy. However, they have to satisfy their curiosity and discover who Batman really is. They pull off the hood to reveal...the face of CHUCK WHITE! Bruce hasn't had the time to remove his disguise so his secret is safe.

However, Dick has regained consciousness and rushes into the radio room locking the door. He turns the radios onto the police wave-band and broadcasts a call for help, telling the location of the hideout. However, the thugs break in, and knock the boy out in a quick fight. The other gang members want to flee since the police will soon be there, but the section 50 agent decides to dispose of the station and Batman and Robin in one fell swoop. He pulls out a trunk of explosives, and lights the fuse to a stick of dynamite. But as he starts to leave, Batman jumps him; he has regained consciousness. The agent tries frantically to escape, but Batman knocks him out. Meanwhile, the fuse burns shorter.

*(Continued on page 14)*

The Batman tries to revive Robin, then lifts him and starts to carry him from the deadly station. We suddenly see the station blasted to bits in a gigantic explosion, apparently taking the "Section 50" leader, Robin, and the Batman to death in the blast!

## CHAPTER 12: EMBERS OF EVIL

As Batman tries to get Robin out of the blazing building in time, he manages to spot a trap door in the floor and get himself and his young aide into it just in time. The entire "Section 50" is blasted to bits with the agent in charge inside it. Alfred, waiting in the Wayne car, sees the blast and rushes toward the wreckage to see if Batman and Robin were inside. Batman and Robin, in the meantime, emerge from another trap door in front of the gate surrounding the enemy hideout. They return to the limousine and Alfred rejoins them, driving off.

Meanwhile, at the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Dr. Daka and his remaining members of the "League of the New Order" are having a ceremonial toast to the death of all enemies of the New Order. Suddenly, they are interrupted by the warning buzzer at the secret entrance in the Cave of Horrors ride. Checking his identification-scanner, Daka sees the number "5" and opens the door. The men from section 50, Burke, Kline, and Andrews walk in. Furious, Daka demands to know why they came, since they were supposed to stay at "Sectin 50." Burke explains what happened and about the interference of the Batman. This is too much for Daka. He has made his decision. Before any more moves are made, the Batman must be disposed of. Suddenly, another signal buzzer sounds, and Daka checks another tunnel with his tele-scanner. He sees Bernie, the owner of the Sphinx Club. Excusing himself for a moment, he lets Bernie in at another tunnel. The two men go to Daka's laboratory where Bernie informs his chief that Marshall is still alive. Daka is amazed and also suspicious when Bernie tells him that he got the dope from the bail bondsman who bailed "Chuck White" out. The man said that White and Marshall were very chummy. Suspecting Marshall may be a danger, Daka decides to send him a special present. A package of cigarettes, not an ordinary brand, but one called "Medusa Cigarettes," as deadly as the creature it is named for. Bernie is to take it to Marshall.

Later the next day, Bruce and Dick arrive at the police station of Gotham City, and nearly run into a figure who exits from the station in a hurry. Bruce recognizes him as Bernie of the Sphinx Club, and then he and Dick go into the jail. The Chief, Arnold, called Bruce to identify Marshall. As Bruce, Dick and Arnold are about to go into the cell block, an officer reports that Marshall fainted in his cell. When the group gets to Marshall's cell, they find the man on the floor, dead, a partially smoked cigarette beside him. Bruce has suspicions and secretly takes the cigarette while Arnold takes the package of cigarettes.

Back at his crime-lab, Bruce makes a chemical test which proves that there was poison in the cigarette. Calling up Chief Arnold, he identifies himself as the Batman, telling Arnold of the poisoned brand of cigarettes. What he doesn't know is that Arnold has one of them in his mouth, ready to light it. But after hanging up the phone, Arnold realizes what he's doing and gets the poisoned cigarette out of his mouth, but fast!

At the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Daka receives word that Marshall died in prison "from a heart attack."



## SERIAL WORLD — SERIAL WORLD — SERIAL WORLD

He marks the man's name off in his roll book and addresses the remaining members of the "League of the New Order." He has lost six valuable men to date due to the interference of the Batman. This intruder must be dealt with. And Daka's mind formulates a cunning plan. Linda Page is to be the bait, and to lure her? Well...Daka speaks into his special microphone and into the room steps the zombieized Martin Warren!

A short time later, Linda is coming from the hospital, when a car nearly hits her. She sees her missing uncle in it, and gives chase. It leads to the Ajax Manufacturing company, Martin Warren's old group before he was sent to prison. At the Wayne home, Bruce calls the hospital to find Linda, but instead is given a message as to her whereabouts. What he doesn't know is that this is a trap for his alter identity; the BATMAN!

Getting into the limousine with Dick and Alfred, the group heads for the old plant. Bruce checks at the front gate, only to be met by a watchman who says Linda left a short time ago. Bruce walks off, not knowing that he missed attack by two of Daka's men, Andrews and Kline, by a narrow margin. However, back at the limousine, Bruce knows the man is lying, for Linda's car is parked a short distance away. It's time for the Batman and Robin to take action!

Inside, Linda is being watched by Prescott, not knowing why she is a prisoner. Meanwhile, Kline, Burke and Andrews are scouting through the plant, waiting for the Batman. They don't have long to wait. For Batman and Robin have sneaked into the basement of the plant and set off a special smoke bomb. As smoke comes from the cellar, Kline sees it and he and Burke and Andrews rush downstairs to put out the "fire" which could send the whole plant sky-high! They are attacked by Batman and Robin, but in the fight, Andrews drops a lighted cigarette in some oil rags, starting a real blaze.

Batman is knocked back, while Andrews and Kline make their escape. Robin has been knocked out. Upstairs, Prescott sees the smoke, and he and Linda start to leave

the building. Shortly after them, Andrews and Kline come with the zombieized Martin Warren.

Downstairs, Burke has escaped through the cellar window, while the inferno rages. Batman revives Robin, and gets him out of the cellar, while he goes to look for Linda. Getting through the barrier of flames, Batman has to keep moving in order to stay alive, for parts of the building are crashing all around him. As he races up the stairs, a huge piece of flaming debris crashes right on top of Batman, apparently ending the career of the valiant crime-fighter!

### CHAPTER 13: EIGHT STEPS DOWN

As a flaming part of the ceiling comes crashing down on Batman, the masked crime-fighter manages to get out from under in time so that it narrowly misses him. He rushes up the stairs toward the main floor to find Linda, not knowing that Fletcher has taken her out of the blaze. In the meantime, the fire department is busily battling the huge inferno, while Robin and Alfred wait at the Wayne car, anxiously hoping for Batman to show up. A few moments later, their vigil is rewarded as the Batman rushes from the blazing building and joins them at the limousine. When Alfred suggests some rest, Batman replies that their next stop is the nearest police phone box.

When they find one, Batman calls Chief Arnold, asking them if their raid on the Sphinx Club was successful. Arnold growls that it wasn't, and that Bernie got away. Batman decides to head for the club and do a little checking on his own. Next stop, the Sphinx Club. When the car arrives at the small bar, the place is closed for the night. But Batman climbs inside through a window, and with a small electric lantern starts searching the place. He finds a small door under the bar, and looks inside, then enters. What it is, is the entrance to a secret room. In the room, he discovers Bernie sleeping. The thug wakes up, and seeing the Batman starts fighting. In the short, but wild battle, Bernie is subdued. A short time later, he is in the Bat's Cave, tied to a chair. He can't tell Batman anything, but seems anxious for the crime-fighter not to go to the Bell Street house, where Batman had been as "Chuck White." When asked why he is so afraid, Bernie states that some people never come back from there, and if that happens to Batman, he'll starve to death in the Bat's Cave. But with grim assurance that he and Robin will be back, Batman leaves through the cave tunnel for his car.

Back at the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Daka and Ames are waiting for word on the kidnapping of Linda Page, when the buzzer signal sounds. Checking his X-Ray scanner, Daka sees that it is No. 5, Preston. He presses a button, and the secret entrance to the CAVE OF HORRORS ride opens to admit Preston and the zombieized Martin Warren.

Daka is delighted to hear that Batman was apparently destroyed in the fire. He's sure that he has seen the last of what he believes to be the group of Batmen. Just then, another buzzer sounds, and Daka switches on a scanner screen. It shows another tunnel entrance. Into it come Fletcher and Linda. Ordering the zombie-Warren to his post via the special microphone, Daka leaves the Council room to welcome his "guest." Opening the secret tunnel entrance, Daka ever the gracious host, has Linda, who's completely terrified, not only of Daka but of the electronically-controlled zombies, taken to the Council room. There he says that he wishes a favor of the girl: she will write a note to her fiance, Bruce Wayne, asking him to

come at a special time and place. Linda realizes that it's a trap and Daka thinks Bruce may be the Batman. She refuses. When Daka uses her uncle as a persuader, Linda doesn't believe him. Picking up the special microphone, Daka summons Warren. Linda is horrified at what has happened to her uncle and breaks down, sobbing hysterically.

Meanwhile, at the Bell Street house, Batman and Robin have arrived and are now searching the premises. They have come into the room where "Chuck White" was watched by Daka from behind a stone wall. They start searching for a secret panel, but find none, not knowing the secret of the picture on the wall. They decide to check another part of the house.

In Daka's headquarters, the madman demands Linda's cooperation or else she will become a zombie. Linda refuses, and Fletcher and Preston take her to the scientist's laboratory. There, Linda is strapped into the strange chair, and the helmet is lowered onto her head. Daka starts the machines, but stops as a warning buzzer sounds. Switching on a scanner, he sees Batman, who has found the subterranean tunnel under the Bell Street House, and has sent Robin to the car for equipment. Linda unconsciously yells a warning, but then knows Batman can't hear her.

This is the second time Batman has been close to his unknown opponent. The first was as "Chuck White" in the Bell Street house, and the second time at this moment; he's only 50 yards away from Daka's lab, separated by rock. And he hasn't seen his enemy yet! Daka decides to give the Batman a little surprise, and presses a control by the scanner screen.

The floor opens beneath Batman, and he plunges into a pit, the walls of which are studded with razor-sharp dagger-type blades. Daka pushes another control, and the walls start to move in on Batman! Sure that Batman is finished Daka switches off the controls, and continues his work on Linda. The lights flash, and machinery hums as Linda goes through the agonizing torture of Daka's zombie process. Her face twists and writhes in agony, as Daka watches, gloating diabolically. And in the tunnel, the walls of the dagger-pit come closer together, with the Batman in the middle. This looks like the definite end for Batman, while Linda appears lost also!

### CHAPTER 14: THE EXECUTIONER STRIKES

As the spike-studded walls close in on the Batman, Robin returns to the cave area with a crowbar that he went to get from the car. Hearing him call, Batman yells for help. Robin pries open the trap door and drops down the crowbar to the Batman. The caped hero jams the crowbar between the closing walls, causing them to stop just in time. He climbs out and he and Robin head back for the limousine to get some sounding equipment in order to find the secret entrance to the enemy's lair.

In the meantime, Daka has completed the process of making Linda a zombie, and has fitted the special electronic radio-control helmet onto her. He tests out the special microphone on her with successful results. He then has her wait in the council chamber, while he, Preston, Fletcher and Wallace go to the secret tunnel and check the dagger-pit. To Daka's amazement and fury, the pit is empty. He is more determined than ever to destroy the Batman, no matter what. However, he first intends to put

*(Continued on page 17)*



# BEHIND THE CLIFFHANGING SCENES

**SCENES YOU NEVER SAW IN YOUR FAVORITE CHAPTER PLAY**



*I wonder if Don Daredevil (seen above) knows about the two guys spinning the wagon wheels below.*

**DON DAREDEVIL RIDES AGAIN — 1951 — Republic.**

into play a diabolical trap for Bruce Wayne, using Linda as bait. Before he and his confederates return to the council room, Daka pulls a switch in his lab that blows up the entrance to the passage.

When Batman and Robin return to the tunnel, they find the blocked entrance. They head back for the limousine and get in. However, Burke and Kline have seen Robin jumping into the car as Alfred drives off. They decide to follow the vehicle and capture Robin for Daka to question. Alfred spots the car following, as Bruce and Dick return to their normal identities. Bruce orders Dick to lie down on the floor of the car when Burke's car cuts them off, forcing them to the curb. When the gangsters appear, Bruce emerges from the car, playing it completely innocent. Bewildered, the thugs say they made a mistake. As the gangsters drive off, Bruce and Dick decide that Batman and Robin should take a hand. And with joy in his heart, Alfred starts the chase. This time, it is the Wayne limousine that does the cutting off, this time by Gotham City Park. As the two thugs flee, Batman and Robin give chase. The fight is wild, with Alfred getting into the fray and almost knocking out Batman. However, Burke and Kline are soon captured. Next stop: The Bat's Cave!

The two thugs are ushered into the main chamber, blindfolded and seated in chairs. When the blindfolds are removed, they see Bernie, who has been tied up since his capture. As Batman is about to begin interrogation, Alfred's voice comes over an intercom, summoning Batman. Entering the Wayne house through the clock entrance, Batman is shown a note from Linda, asking him to meet the girl at a certain building in a certain room. Batman smells a trap, but decides to go along with the plot, hoping to try and find out more about the spy ring.

A short time later, the limousine pulls up in front of the house in the note. Robin and Alfred wait in the car, while Batman climbs the drainpipe to check things over. However, inside the building, in a room, Preston and Wallace have brought in a coffin-like box, labeled "Wax Exhibits." They open it to reveal Linda in her zombie-state. She is seated in a chair, and the two men leave to await developments. A few moments later, Batman enters the apartment. He finds Linda and is examining her due to her hypnotic-like state. Preston and Wallace break and knock Batman out. Then they put him in the box, and take Linda away, after having two delivery men come for the box.

The delivery men take the box to the "CAVE OF HORRORS" ride where Preston meets them and has them load the box on one of the ride cars.

Inside the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, Daka is waiting with Andrews and Fletcher, when a warning buzzer sounds. Checking the visi-scanner, he sees Preston's number emerge, and opens the secret cave door. Preston enters, and informs Daka of the box and the contents. Daka orders the zombieized Martin Warren and another zombie to bring the crate in. Then he presses a button, opening the trap door over the pit of "pet" alligators. He orders the zombies to throw the box into the pit. Daka, Fletcher, Preston and Andrews rush up to the trap door and look down, Daka with a diabolical look on his face. We hear the cracking of the box and a hideous scream of agony, as it seems to be the end for the Batman!

## CHAPTER 15: THE DOOM OF THE RISING SUN

When Batman was knocked out and put in the box, Preston left Wallace behind to watch the crate while he returned Linda to Daka's headquarters. Inside the crate,

Batman regained consciousness and took his pocket radio from the utility belt he was wearing. He contacted Robin, and began to tap out his situation in Morse Code. Robin told Alfred to wait and then climbs up the pipe to the room. Wallace has gone outside for a moment and Robin is able to jimmy open the lock of the box. However, Wallace enters, and attacks Robin. But Batman pops up from the box, and in a few minutes, Wallace is rendered unconscious. Batman and Robin put Wallace in the box in hopes of finding out the spy-ring headquarters. So after the delivery was made to the CAVE OF HORRORS and the box was tossed into the alligator pit, Daka, Fletcher, Preston and Andrews were amazed and horrified to see that the victim of the deadly reptiles was Wallace! Daka is entirely unsympathetic, saying that this is Wallace's reward for failure.

Meanwhile, the Wayne limousine has arrived near the CAVE OF HORRORS ride. But Batman and Robin can't go in, the barker is still out front. Batman places the responsibility for helping on Alfred. He pretends to be drunk and boisterous, forcing the barker to throw him out. Then the Batman and Robin sneak inside. The barker has gathered the night's receipts and is taking them to Daka. Batman and Robin have already had an encounter with the "cave-man" and rendered him unconscious, tying him up. They see the barker go through the process of identification at the tele-screen camera hidden in the rock, and enter the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR. Batman decides to see what will happen if they try the same routine. When Daka checks the tele-screen he sees the x-ray of a hand, but with the seal of the Batman. This is a moment Daka has waited for, and he orders his men to seize Batman and Robin.

The fight is quick in the cave, with the five spies knocked out and tied. Robin is ordered to have Alfred get help. What they don't know is that Alfred has spotted the barker locking the gate to the ride and is fooling around with it. But he has been picked up by a policeman and taken to the station, leaving the lock open.

Batman, in the meantime, has entered the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, and is suddenly attacked and seized by two of the zombies. Recognizing Daka as a Jap, Batman also recalls who the man is. He was to have been deported, but the two immigration men were murdered and Daka vanished from sight. However, Daka assures Batman that it will do him no good to fight. When Batman tries to get at Daka, he is stunned by a blow from one of the zombies. Then, at Daka's orders, the zombies take Batman to the lab.

Robin has entered the room a short time later. But in the lab, Batman is strapped to the zombie-chair. Daka decides to rub in his triumph and summons the zombieized Linda Page and Martin Warren. The two zombies have to pass through the council room and Robin sees his friends in their strange state. The two zombies pass between two zombie guards, and Robin starts to follow after finding that the zombies will not attack.

Back in the lab, Daka is telling Batman that he will soon be a zombie. Then, to have his little bit of fun, Daka has Linda slap Batman's face. Then, as he prepares to start the zombieizing process on Batman, Robin, who has been carrying a long rope, lassos Daka. In a few minutes, Daka is trussed up like a Christmas turkey. Robin releases Batman from the zombie chair, and the two of them question Daka. Batman finds out that Linda and Martin Warren can be restored to normalcy but Daka seems reluctant. As Daka has explained the process to him when

he was tied up, Batman threatens to make a zombie out of Daka unless the Jap agrees to help restore Batman's friends to normal. Daka agrees. Linda is seated in the chair and the bell lowered over her head. But Daka seems to be waiting expectantly as Batman reaches for the main switch. Suddenly the crime-fighter suspects something when he sees the heavy rubber gloves. He knows that if he had pulled the switch without the gloves, he would have been electrocuted.

Under Daka's directions, Batman restores Linda to normal, and prepares to follow up on Martin Warren. Meanwhile, a police car is racing toward the CAVE OF HORRORS ride. Inside the car are Chief Arnold, several policemen and Alfred. He has convinced the police of Batman's peril and they are racing to the rescue.

Meanwhile, in the council chamber, Batman and Robin, along with the now restored Linda and Warren, are going over the books and records kept by Daka. In the documents are the names and data of people and organizations in the vast Axis-Japanese spy rings. Unknown to the group, however, Daka, still tied up, has removed a dagger from his coat pocket, and is busily sawing away at his bonds.

The mad oriental frees himself, leaps up and seizes Linda, using her as a shield. He is about to leave through the cave door, when Batman yells for Robin to press the button closing it. Fearing that this might happen, Daka

releases Linda and rushes toward the door. But Robin has pushed the wrong button, and Daka plunges screaming into the alligator pit. Justice is ironic in that Daka is dying at the fangs and claws of his "pets."

Batman has Robin close the trap door. At that moment, Alfred and the police enter the CAVE OF HORRORS and find the tied-up spies in the ride outside the entrance to the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR. They go inside and find Batman, Robin, Linda and Martin Warren. We have already learned that Warren was framed by false testimony by Daka's man Fletcher.

However, even though he has been informed of the spy ring and the five men, along with the other three men who are in the Bat's Cave, Chief Arnold is still distrustful of Batman and is about to take off the hood covering Batman's face. However, Alfred, seeing the trouble, presses the button opening the door to the lab. When the police whirl around, Batman and Robin rush off. Alfred is released, as Bruce and Dick enter in their normal identities.

Arnold, bluffing, tells Bruce that his "best detective," the Batman, helped capture the spies. All Bruce can say, as he takes Linda's arm, is that if the Batman seems to be doing everything, he doesn't need to really do anything at all. And Bruce, Dick, Linda, Martin Warren and Alfred leave the HOUSE OF THE OPEN DOOR, marking the end of the strange and deadly case solved by the Batman and Robin.

**DIRECTED BY LAMBERT HILLHER,  
"THE BATMAN" WAS RE-RELEASED  
IN 1966 AND SHOWN ALL IN ONE  
TIME. IT WAS PART OF THE  
CAMP CRAZE OF THE 60'S.**





# REMEMBERING ROY

## ANOTHER INTERVIEW WITH ROY BARCROFT

★ NEVER BEFORE PRINTED — BY GREGORY R. JACKSON JR.



Roy Barcroft was born with the name Howard H. Ravenscroft in Crab Orchard, Nebraska on September 7, 1902. He became, without doubt, one of the greatest serial and B-western villains of all time.

He started out with bit parts at many different studios and usually played one of the henchmen who took orders from the chief heavy. As time went by, Roy received bigger and bigger roles until he became the main villain in many movies. Republic Studios was so impressed with Roy's screen presence as a villain that they didn't want to lose him; so they signed him up and Roy was under contract to Republic for ten glorious years, 1943 to 1953.

If you saw a great Republic serial during those years, chances are that Roy was the chief heavy. HAUNTED HARBOR, DAUGHTER OF DON Q, SON OF ZORRO, JESSE JAMES RIDES AGAIN, G-MEN NEVER

FORGET, FEDERAL AGENTS VS. UNDERWORLD INC., GHOST OF ZORRO, THE JAMES BROTHERS OF MISSOURI, DESPERADOES OF THE WEST, DON DAREDEVIL RIDES AGAIN, and RADAR MEN FROM THE MOON all featured the master villainy of Roy Barcroft. Roy's favorite serial was MANHUNT OF MYSTERY ISLAND in which, with the aid of his "transformation machine," he changed his body into the menacing Captain Mephisto. Roy's second favorite was THE PURPLE MONSTER STRIKES in which he played a being from Mars with the ability to take over the bodies of humans.

As if these serials weren't enough, Roy was also getting his comeuppance from all of Republic's western stars — Roy Rogers, Wild Bill Elliott, Rex Allen, Rocky Lane, Monte Hale, and Sunset Carson.

When Republic stopped making serials and B-westerns, Roy free-lanced in many movies and appeared in almost every TV show you can think of: SUPERMAN, THE LONE RANGER, HAVE GUN, WILL TRAVEL, WANTED DEAD OR ALIVE, THE VIRGINIAN, GUNSMOKE, THE MICKEY MOUSE CLUB (as the owner of the "Triple R Ranch" on the "Spin and Marty" series), HERE'S LUCY — the list is endless.

In his later years, with white hair and a beard, he often played older men. Roy was still active in films and TV at the time of his death on November 28, 1969 of cancer.

I was fortunate enough to visit Roy several times at his home in Tarzana and I can verify that he was the complete opposite of his screen image — he was a very friendly, kind man with a good sense of humor.

A portion of my interview with Roy Barcroft two years before his death has previously been published. However, the following portion has never before appeared in print.

**Q: You've of course legally changed your name from Howard H. Ravenscroft to Roy Barcroft?**

**RB:** No, it's never been changed legally. I've used it ever since social Security numbers came in and I've never used the other name. If somebody called me by my other name, I'd know they knew me then. So I never hear the other name any more although I have one brother here in town who still uses that name. There's no other Barcroft in the phone book; I'm the only one. So that kind of individualizes me.

**Q: I was surprised to find you listed in the phone book. I thought most actors had unlisted numbers.**

**RB:** Oh, hell, we're economic actors; we're Thursday actors — that's pay day. We're not stars; stars really do that.

**Q: Well, you sure were a star when you were with Republic.**

**RB:** Well, we worked cheap. (He laughed heartily then.)

**Q: Have you ever filmed a picture out of the United States?**

**RB:** Never have — always kind of wanted to. Now I kind of got over the idea. But it used to be seems like

everybody had a good location but me. Like Harry Woods — he went to India; was over there for a year. He came back with all kinds of tiger skins, boa constrictors, and souvenirs. But I never got past Utah; never got a good location out of the country.

**Q: I've seen the feature version of the serial S.O.S. COAST GUARD on TV and it's horrible because it's not edited well.**

**RB:** Well, it was horrible to start with. I never saw such a bad picture in my life.

**Q: You made a serial in 1941 called KING OF THE TEXAS RANGERS.**

**RB:** Yes, with "Slingin'" Sammy Baugh. We had quite a time with him. Of course. Sammy was a great football star and had never been on a set before. They came in and made an actor out of him — but he was the first lead in a serial that we could ever really say, "He could ride." He was raised on a ranch and had horses; his whole family rode horses just like rodeo kings.

**Q: Well, you rode a lot too in serials and westerns.**

**RB:** Oh, yeah; we all had to. So when they'd get these leads in here, they'd probably never been on a horse and, by golly, we'd have a time with them. We'd try to get them in and get them out of the team and all. So we were so pleased with Sammy; he mixed in with the heavies and he was one of us.

**Q: Did actors often fluff their lines in serials?**

**RB:** Oh, sure. Sometimes we have so many retakes that they finally say, "Oh, let's go to lunch and come back and try it again." Every once in a while, an actor just goes sky high and there's no reason for it. Nowadays, especially with TV, they have such a short schedule that they drive them just like working in a factory.

**Q: Republic really used you a lot.**

**RB:** When we were under contract, we'd be on a show and they'd say, "Well, you're not working on that tomorrow." So they'd say, "Well, come in and do a day on such and such a show." And my gosh, we were just shoving back and forth from one show to another. And then if they wanted a voice over the radio, like a car radio — "Calling all cars!" or something like that — they'd use our voices. We were pretty busy!

**Q: Did anybody ever tell you that you appeared in too many pictures? Like did little kids say to you, "Gee, I see you every single week!"**

**RB:** No. I think in the old days we used to sort of establish a relationship that we don't have nowadays. We got to be like old friends; old buddies. And they looked for you all the time. I can remember the kids, when they went into the show on Saturday afternoon, used to say, "Who you for — the goodies or the badies? The goodies go over on this side of the aisle; the badies on this side." And then they see you come, they know you're going to do something dirty, something crooked, and they used to like you for that. They didn't really get tired of you because they were your friends; they looked for you.

**Q: You said you did all your scenes in RADAR MEN FROM THE MOON in one day; yet you received third billing as "Retik" right after George Wallace as "Commando Cody" and Aline Towne as "Joan Gilbert." Were you then paid by your high billing or by how many days you worked?**

**RB:** You're paid by how many days you work on it.

**Q: So, in other words, you could have a lower billing but work more days and you'd be paid more than someone who was billed higher but worked fewer days?**

**RB:** Oh, sure. It could happen that somebody way down — now take Dale Van Sickel and Tom Steele — they probably made more money than anybody in that whole serial because they did various parts: they'd put a mustache on them and they'd do this part and take it off and do another part and do all the stunts besides. So they probably made more money than George Wallace or any of us top guys. I might go in there for one day — say \$300 a day — and I'd get third billing. And this guy here goes all the way through and he'd probably make \$4,000. The billing really doesn't say anything about how much you make because they bargain with everybody anyway. When you go into this business you sort of finally establish a price. It's the hardest thing in the world to raise your salary because every studio in the business knows what you worked for the last time.

**Q: But after a while you must get some increases?**

**RB:** You do gradually rise it up with time but you still can stay a low man in salary. It depends a lot on your agent — how hard he fights to get your salary. I remember I worked the first show Bob Mitchum ever worked in which was on a "Hopalong Cassidy." We both did henchmen and I think I was getting quite a little bit more money than he was at the time. But he finally developed a real independent attitude and I know when salaries used to be \$250 a week for a leading man, he wouldn't take it; he wanted \$300. And I know Republic tried to get him for \$250 and he held out. This is what you got to do: if they want you, you've got to say no. And you lose this one, but next time, they'll give you your money and you'll come back. So he turned Republic down for \$250 a week and the next time I saw him over there he was getting \$7,000 a week.

**Q: Do you have any idea why Republic switched to Rocky Lane to make the "Red Ryder" movies after Wild Bill Elliott — did he quit?**

**RB:** No, Bill moved up a notch. He wanted to get into features which was a bad mistake for him. Suddenly he thought he was leading man material; he wanted to be a romantic lead and Republic was looking for a leading man for Vera Hruba Ralston. She was the girlfriend of Herbert J. Yates, the man who owned Republic Studios. He couldn't get anybody to work with her; she was that bad. And he was going to make a star out of her or else. She was a skater originally, you know — very beautiful, but as an actress she just couldn't cut it. And she had a terrific accent anyway; she was Czechoslovakian. So he got Bill Elliott and said, "We'll move you up and make you her leading man." Well, he was just tickled to death to do it and he did one feature with her as a leading man and the next one, he comes back and does her father. This just upset him to no end. So then Bill just cut out of the studio all together and produced a couple of shows on his own; he didn't make any money and it broke him — he borrowed money to do it.

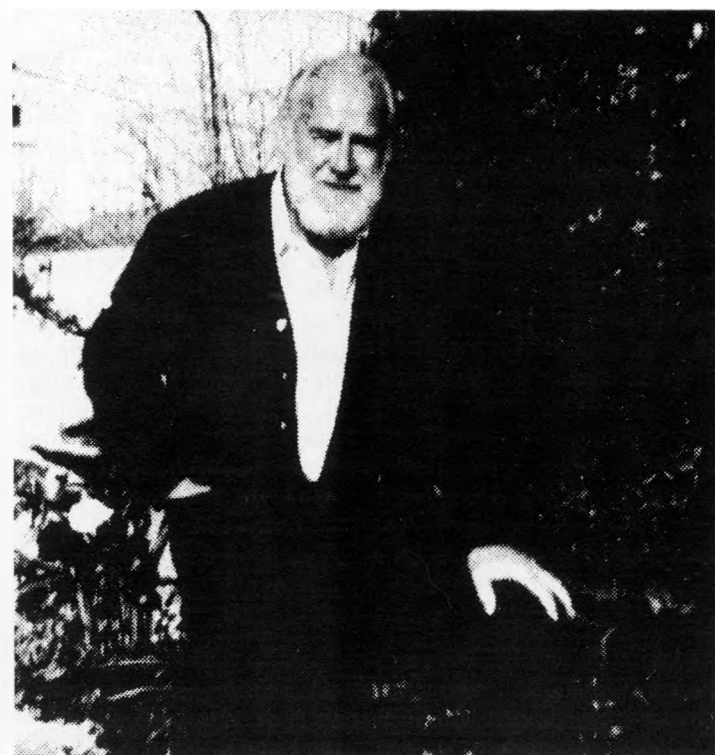
**Q: Have you played a villain lately?**

**RB:** No, not recently because of these old gray hairs; you don't hit a gray-haired, old man. Usually, the villain always fought with the lead and so now I can be the father; I can be a nice, old man.

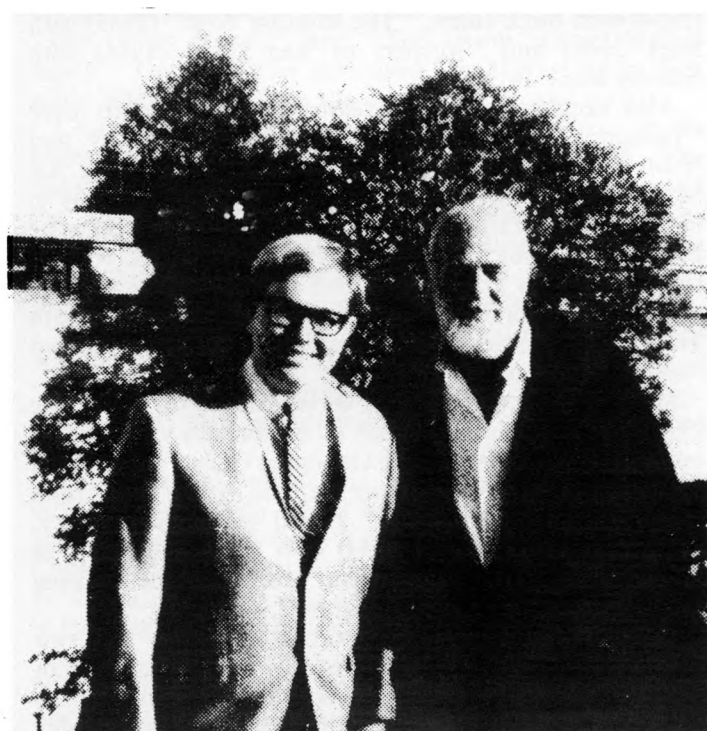
**Q: I kind of miss seeing you be real mean.**

**RB:** Yeah, I always liked it because it seems like you could do more with your voice when you were strong and commanding. Now you kind of sit back in the corner and

be real nice **and I don't like it** — it doesn't show up good; it really doesn't! Now I might as well just grow a beard and do comedy.



**Roy Barcroft just before his passing in 1969.**



**Roy and author Greg Jackson Jr., at the serial stars home, Serial Fandoms Best.**



**SERIAL WORLD PRESENTS**  
**SETTING THE RECORD**  
**STRAIGHT...**  
**A LOOK AT THE**

# SOUND SERIALS

**BY CHARLES MCCLEARY**

The first sound serials were "Ace of Scotland Yard" and "King of the Kongo," produced by Universal and Mascot respectively in 1929. The last serial was "Blazing the Overland Trail," produced by Columbia in 1956. There were a lot of serials in-between, some good, some bad, some overrated and some underrated. Let's go back through the years for a look at the sound serials.

With the exception of a handful of independents, most of the serials in the early 1930's were the product of either Universal Pictures or Mascot Pictures. During those years, both studios were releasing three, four or five serials each year. Unfortunately, many of the Universal serials of this period haven't been seen since their original release and may be lost forever. Some of the better ones that have been seen include "The Indians Are Coming" (1930) with Tim McCoy, "Battling With Buffalo Bill" (1931) with Tom Tyler, "Heroes of the West" (1932) with Noah Beery Jr., "The Air Mail Mystery" (1932) with James Flavin, "The Perils of Pauline" (1933) with Evelyn Knapp, "The Phantom of the Air" (1933) with Tom Tyler, "The Vanishing Shadow" (1934) with Onslow Stevens, "The Red Rider" (1934) with Buck Jones, "The Roaring West" (1935) with Buck Jones and "Rustlers of Red Dog" (1935) with Johnny Mack Brown.

Also notable among the early Universal serials were "Tailspin Tommy" (1934) with Maurice Murphy and Noah Beery Jr. and "Tailspin Tommy In the Great Air Mystery" (1935) with Clark Williams replacing Murphy in the title role. "Tailspin Tommy" was the first serial to be based on a comic strip character. The Tailspin Tommy strip, created by Hal Forrest, had been appearing in daily and Sunday comic pages since the late 1920's. Both Tailspin Tommy serials were quite good and both featured excellent aerial photography.

Most of the early Mascot serials failed to match the Universal serials in story, cast or production value. Some exceptions to this were "The Galloping Ghost" (1931) with Red Grange, "The Hurricane Express" (1932) with John Wayne, "The Devil Horse" (1932) with Harry Carey, "Burn 'Em Up Barnes" (1934) with Jack Mulhall, "The Miracle Rider" (1935) with Tom Mix and "The Fighting Marines" (1935) with Grant Withers.

The year of 1936 was important to serials for two reasons. First, Republic Pictures was formed and began producing serials. Second, Universal presented one of the all-time serials, "Flash Gordon," based on the great Alex Raymond comic strip and starring Buster Crabbe as Flash.

The Flash Gordon strip had been extremely popular since it first appeared on January 7, 1934 and the serial equalled the comic strip in popularity. The serial remained quite faithful in concept to the strip and made use of most of the characters and situations of the strip.

Universal released another very good serial in 1936, "Ace Drummond" starring John King and based on the comic strip created by the world famous aviator, Captain Eddie Rickenbacker.

After two rather routine serials, "Darkest Africa" starring Clyde Beatty and "Undersea Kingdom" with Ray Corrigan, Republic came up with a very good serial in their third effort. This was "The Vigilantes are Coming" and starred Robert Livingston as a Zorro-type masked man known as The Eagle.

One of the best of the handful of independently produced serials, "The Clutching Hand" was also released in 1936. A good cast included Jack Mulhall, Rex Lease and Ruth Mix.

Columbia released their first two serials in 1937, "Jungle Menace" with Frank Buck and "The Mysterious Pilot" starring Captain Frank Hawks. Neither serial was up to the Universal or Republic standards of that year.

Republic came up with an excellent serial in 1937, "Dick Tracy" starring Ralph Byrd and western comedian Smiley Burnette. The serial was based on the great Chester Gould comic strip and was the first of four Dick Tracy serials to be produced by Republic.

Another 1937 Republic serial, "Zorro Rides Again" marked the initial teaming of directors William Witney and John English who were to direct many great serials in the years to come. Unfortunately, "Zorro Rides Again" was a poor serial with little action and almost no plot.

Universal relied heavily on comic strip characters for their 1937 serials. These included "Jungle Jim" starring Grant Withers and based on another Alex Raymond strip, "Tim Tyler's Luck" starring Frankie Thomas and based on the strip created by Lyman Young, "Radio Patrol" with Grant Withers and "Secret Agent X-9" with Scott Kolk. All were King Features owned strips as Universal set the pace in bringing comic characters to the screen.

Republic's four 1938 serials were excellent. These included "The Lone Ranger" starring Lee Powell and Herman Brix and based on the popular Fran Striker radio and comic hero, "Dick Tracy Returns" with Byrd again portraying Tracy in a very successful sequel to the first Tracy serial, "The Fighting Devil Dogs," again with Powell and Brix and "Hawk of the Wilderness" with Brix going it alone this time. All four serials were directed by the team of Whitney and English.

Not to be outdone, Universal came up with "Flash Gordon's Trip To Mars," again with Buster Crabbe as Flash. The popularity of this serial may have even exceeded that of the original. Universal had another winner in "Red Barry," again starring Buster Crabbe and also based on a popular King Features comic strip.

Columbia's best serial of 1938 was "The Great Adventures of Wild Bill Hickok" starring Wild Bill (then known as Gordon) Elliott. This was Elliott's first starring role after many years as a supporting player and it started him on his way to becoming one of Hollywood's top western stars.

Columbia had an excellent serial in 1939, "Overland With Kit Carson" again starring Elliott. An excellent supporting cast included Iris Meredith, LeRoy Mason, Trevor Bardette and Dick Curtis, all familiar names to

**SPACE SHIP RUNS AMOK!**

# ROBOT ROCKET!

Chapter 12

**CAPTAIN VIDEO**

MASTER OF THE  
STRATOSPHERE



serial fans. The presence of Elliott gave the serial the touch it needed to become Columbia's best serial to date and probably the best serial of 1939.

Republic's best serial of 1939 was "Daredevils of the Red Circle" with Charles Quigley, Herman Brix and David Sharpe as three circus acrobats. Republic also released "Dick Tracy's G-Men" which was good but not quite up to the two earlier Tracy serials.

In 1939, Universal released "Buck Rogers" starring Buster Crabbe and based on the Dick Calkins comic strip which first appeared on January 7, 1929. While the "Buck Rogers" serial was good, it failed to match the earlier Flash Gordon serials.

The year 1940 was an outstanding one for serials. Republic had four good ones, including "The Drums of Fu Manchu" starring Henry Brandon as the evil Oriental villain. While this serial didn't quite catch the flavor of the Sax Rohmer novels, it was still a good effort. One interesting aspect of this serial is that it is the only one that comes to mind where the villain was not killed or captured at the end. Whatever happened to the sequel?

In other Republic serials, Allan Lane brought Zane Grey's "King of the Royal Mounted" to the screen and made it an outstanding success. Don "Red" Barry did the same with Fred Harman's comic character, "Red Ryder." Mysterious Dr. Satan" brought an original masked hero to the screen, The Copperhead, ably portrayed by Robert Wilcox.

Universal scored well with "Flash Gordon Conquers the

Universe," the last of their great Flash Gordon serials. Buster Crabbe again portrayed Flash. Universal also brought another radio and comic hero to the screen with "The Green Hornet" and "The Green Hornet Strikes Again." Gordon Jones portrayed The Hornet in the first while Warren Hull took the part in the second serial.

Columbia brought another pulp magazine hero to the screen with "The Shadow" starring Victory Jory. The handling of Maxwell Grant's invisible hero was poor and the serial was disappointing. Also disappointing was "Terry and the Pirates" based on the Milton Caniff comic strip which began on October 22, 1934. William Tracy starred as Terry with Granville Owens his pal, Pat Ryan.

Columbia had far better efforts with "The Green Archer" and Victor Jory and Iris Meredith and "Deadwood Dick" starring Don Douglas and Lorna Gray. Both were very entertaining serials and fast paced throughout.

1941 was an outstanding year for Republic serials, including one which would be a strong contender for the greatest serial of all-time. That would be "Adventures of Captain Marvel" starring Tom Tyler and Frank Coghlan Jr. Captain Marvel made his first comic book appearance in February 1940 in the first issue of Whiz Comics. He was one of the most popular of the comic characters and also became one of the most popular serial heroes. The flying scenes in this serial are outstanding and worthy of special commendation.

"Dick Tracy Vs. Crime, Inc." starring Ralph Byrd as



Tracy for the fourth and last time was another outstanding serial. The special effects are marvelous as Tracy battles an invisible villain, The Ghost.

Republic's two other 1941 serials, "Jungle Girl" with Frances Gifford and Tom Neal and "King of the Texas Rangers" with football great, Sammy Baugh were also both outstanding serials although "King of the Texas Rangers" was hampered by the presence of Baugh in the starring role. Baugh's lack of acting ability was a real detriment to the serial. This would have been a good role for Allan Lane who was to appear in four other Republic serials.

Universal had an excellent serial in 1941, "Riders of Death Valley" with its "million dollar cast" including Dick Foran, Leo Carillo, Buck Jones, Charles Brickford, Lon Chaney Jr., Big Boy Williams and Noah Beery Jr. This was by far the most imposing cast ever to appear in a serial and this, coupled with Universal's usually fine production value made the serial a rousing success.

Universal released two other serials in 1941, "Sky Raiders" with Donald Woods and "Sea Raiders" with The Dead End Kids. Both were just routine serials with "Sky Raiders" probably the better of the two.

Columbia also came up with two very good serials in 1941, "White Eagle" starring Buck Jones and "The Iron Claw" with Charles Quigley. Both were very well done and "White Eagle," especially, had some fine cliffhangers.

Columbia also came up with two all-time clinkers in 1941, "Holt of the Secret Service" with Jack Holt and "The Spider Returns" starring Warren Hull. Ludicrous might be the best term to apply to these two.

The most disappointing aspect of 1942 was that "Spy Smasher" was a good serial...it should have been a great one. The fact that it wasn't can be blamed on the Republic screen writers who simply took far too many liberties with the concept of the character. Spy Smasher, like Captain Marvel, was a Fawcett Publications comic book hero who also made his first appearance in the February 1940 issue of Whiz Comics. In the serial, Spy Smasher, nicely portrayed by Kane Richmond, battled his traditional comic strip enemy, The Mask. The Mask, who would have made an excellent mystery villain, was a submarine commander in the serial who had his mask on or off depending on the whims of the writers.

The only serial that saved 1942 for Republic was the excellent "Perils of Nyoka" starring Kay Aldridge and Clayton Moore. Despite her thick Southern drawl, Kay did a good job as Nyoka. This was one of the fastest paced serials Republic ever made and it is blessed with some outstanding cliffhangers.

Universal had two excellent serials in 1942, "Gang Busters" with Kent Taylor and "Don Winslow of the Navy" starring Don Terry. "Gang Busters," based on the popular Phillips H. Lord radio program was probably the better of the two. "Don Winslow of the Navy," based on the Frank Martinek newspaper comic strip which began on March 5, 1934, had Winslow battling his arch enemy, The Scorpion.

Columbia had two fine serials in 1942, both westerns. They were "The Valley of Vanishing Men" with Wild Bill Elliott and "Perils of the Royal Mounted" with Robert Stevens (Kellard). "Perils of the Royal Mounted" was the last serial directed by James Horne before his death and it was one of his better efforts.

Columbia had cast Elliott in "The Valley of Vanishing Men" as a form of punishment since serials were considered a notch below features in prestige. The

Columbia executives were unhappy with Elliott as he had already informed them he was leaving to go to Republic when his contract expired. Columbia was trying to build up their own stable of western stars at the time and certainly didn't look with favor on Elliott's leaving. "The Valley of Vanishing Men" had an excellent plot and the casting of Elliott helped turn this into one of the best western serials ever filmed.

The best serials of 1943 all had a war-time theme. These included Universal's "The Adventures of Smilin' Jack" starring Tom Brown and based on the great Zack Mosley comic strip, Columbia's "The Batman" starring Lewis Wilson and based on Bob Kane's comic hero who had first appeared in Detective Comics No. 27 (May 1939) and Republic's "Secret Service In Darkest Africa" with Rod Cameron.

Columbia also had a good effort with "The Phantom" starring Tom Tyler and based on Lee Falk and Ray Moore's newspaper comic strip. Universal also scored with "Adventures of the Flying Cadets" with Johnny Downs and "Don Winslow of the Coast guard" which had Don Terry repeating his role of Winslow.

Republic also released "The Masked Marvel" in 1943. This serial attempted to be different by concealing the identity of the hero until the last chapter as did "The Lone Ranger" five years earlier.

Republic failed to do justice to a great comic character in their 1943 serial version of "Captain America" starring Dick Purcell. Other than the title, any similarity between the serial and Joe Simon and Jack Kirby's comic hero was purely accidental. It was bad enough to drop Cap's boy sidekick, Bucky from the screenplay but changing his alter ego from soldier Steve Rogers to district attorney Grant Gardiner was totally unforgivable.

Republic made something of a comeback in 1944 with two fine serials, "Haunted Harbor" with Kane Richmond and Kay Aldridge and "The Tiger Woman" with Allan Lane and Linda Stirling. This marked the end of Kay's reign as Republic's serial queen and the beginning of Linda's. Both leading ladies contributed more than their share to the studios chapter-plays.

Universal had two good serials in 1944 with "The Mystery of the River Boat" starring Robert Lowery and "The Great Alaskan Mystery" with Milburn Stone.





Columbia laid a couple of eggs with Gilbert Roland in "The Desert Hawk" and Robert Scott in "Black Arrow."

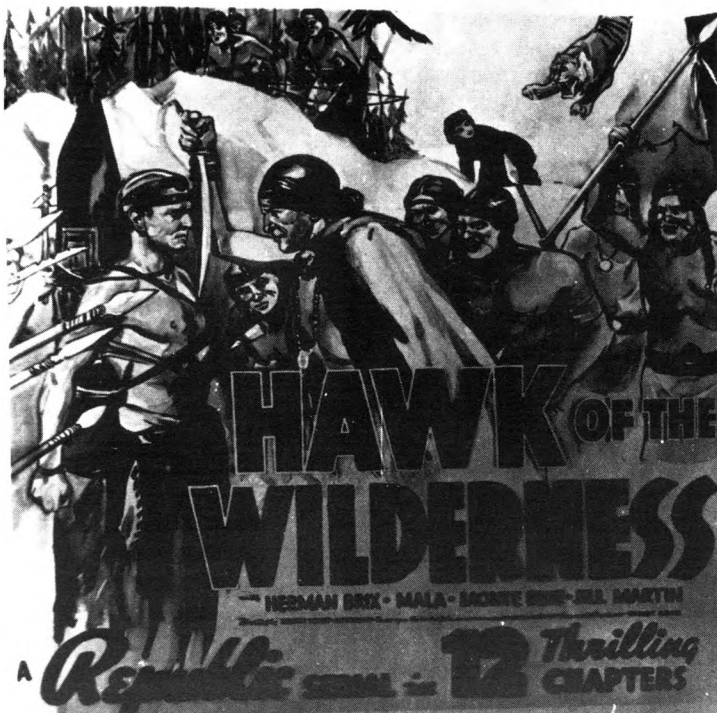
Columbia's only good serial of 1945 was "The Monster and the Ape" starring Robert Lowery and George Macready. After that, Sam Katzman took over serial production at Columbia and certainly did nothing to improve the quality of their product, at least for awhile. Sam produced "Brenda Starr, Reporter" starring Joan Woodbury and Kane Richmond and based on Dale Messick's newspaper comic strip feature. This was a routine serial as was "Jungle Raiders," also with Richmond. Columbia's fourth serial of the year, "Who's Guilty?" was a total disaster.

Republic had three very good serials in 1945, "Manhunt of Mystery Island," "Federal Operator 99" and "The Purple Monster Strikes." The first and third of these were very similar in that Roy Barcroft portrayed characters into whose bode other members of the cast changed, either by sitting in a transformation chair or by sniffing a strange gas. Also, Linda Stirling was the heroine being periled by Roy in both serials.

Universal had an excellent serial in 1945, "The Master Key" starring Milburn Stone. Their other serials of that year, "Jungle Queen," "The Royal Mounted Rides Again" and "Secret Agent X-9" were all routine with the latter probably being the best of the three.

Universal made their last serial in 1946, "The Mysterious Mr. M" starring Richard Martin. It was sad to see Universal cease serial production as their serials, while often not having as much action as those made by other studios, usually led the way in cast, plot and production value. Also, their handling of comic strip characters was generally closer to the comic format than those made by the other studios.

1946 was generally a poor year for serials. Republic scored to some degree with "King of the Forest Rangers" starring Larry Thompson and "The Crimson Ghost" with Charles Quigley. Kirk Alyn, who was later to go on to greater heights in the serial version of Superman made his serial debut in a bomb called "Daughter of Don Q."



# SATURDAY MATINEE SPY HUNTERS OF WORLD WAR II

BY ERIC HOFFMAN

One of the favorite plot basics for the serials of the late 30s and 40s was the espionage gambit, in which either government agents, or patriotic citizens, sometimes both working together, did battle with fifth columnists out to cripple our country. During the silents, W.W.I. brought out more saboteurs and fifth columnists than you could shake a stick at. With the Axis forces gradually increasing their giant steps toward the democracies, film studios were quick to seize the opportunity to add some topical 'punch' to the B-pictures and chapter plays.

Since we were not actually into the war around 1939, the enemy had to remain unidentified, with only hints as to the nationality of our country's enemies woven through the plot. 'Dick Tracy's G-Men' (1939) pitted Tracy (Ralph Byrd, the Tracy for film buffs) against Nicholas Zarnoff (famed character actor and director Irving Pichel). Unlike most serials where the villain met one well-deserved death, Zarnoff could have been called 'the man with two lives'; already captured for his illegal activities at the beginning of chapter one, Zarnoff was executed in the gas chamber. However, his aides managed to get a drug to him (via a newspaper ad printed with inks spiked with the drug) that suspended his vital functions, giving the appearance of death. Brought back literally from the grave, Zarnoff continued his depredations for 15 episodes until he got his just desserts in the middle of a desert, unwittingly drinking from a poisoned water hole. Filled with fine performances, slam-bang action and a nicely developed plot, 'G-Men' proved to be one of Republic's best entries in the series.

As seen from the above, comic-strip characters seem to be favorite foils for fifth columnists. Zane Grey's 'King of the Royal Mounted' did double duty in two serials. The first pitted him against spies who were stealing shipments of Compound X, a pitchblende element used to treat infantile paralysis. The element had another property, unknown to its discoverer; specially treated and applied to mines, bombs, etc., it made the mines magnetic. King soon found himself battling like mad for 12 chapters to prevent master spy Kettler (Robert Strange) from getting away with a weapon that would have aided Canada's enemies.

Sgt. King had more tangible enemies whose allegiance was never in doubt in the follow-up 'King of the Mounties' (1942). For 12 episodes, the fearless Mountie tangled with a gang of Axis saboteurs commanded by three — count em — spy chiefs, Abner Biberman — Admiral Yamata of Japan (Bonzai!), William Vaughn — Marshal Von Horst (Seig Heil!) and Nestor Paiva as County Baroni (Vive Il Duce!). While quisling Douglas Dumbrille relayed orders to heavies Bradley Page and Anthony Warde, the three Axis aces were involved with the serial's big gimmick — the 'Falcon', a bizarre reworking of the Bat Plane from 'Spy Smasher.' In both serials, the airship could fly normally, climb to great heights, and rise and land vertically, enabling the nasty trio to enter the secret headquarters, a dormant volcano where offices and quarters had been chiseled out of the rock. Needless to say, the Mounties triumphed again in halting the spies from



***Spy Smasher about to enter Republic's famous Flying Disc Plane.***



***Don Winslow of the Coast Guard saw Elyse Knox as Mercedes in trouble. Seems evil and sexy June Duprez and friend have the upper hand.***



***Robert Q. Davis (Rudolph Anders) as "His Excellency" King of the Texas Rangers.***



seizing a revolutionary plane detector and the Axis chiefs got theirs when the volcano erupted through bombs knocked in the lava filled crater.

'Spy Smasher' is still considered to be one of the best comic-strip based spy fighter serials. Adapted from the popular Fawcett comic strip, 'Spy-Smasher' gave matinee audiences 12 exciting weeks of adventure, thrills and loads of Republic action at its best. Kane Richmond did double-duty as Spy Smasher (a.k.a. Alan Armstrong) and his twin brother Jac: Jack was a screenwriters device for the serial, but proved to be an ingredient that added an extra something to the goings on. The film's heavy, the Mask (Spy Smasher's nemesis from the strip), was played by Hans Schumm, one of the many actors who were constantly portraying the Nazis with frighteningly brutal believability. But without a believable hero, 'Spy Smasher' might have been less than the success it was. Richmond threw himself into the parts, totally convincing in both characters. The action remains classic with Dave Sharpe doubling for both Richmond characters, and Republic's entire company of stunters participating in brawl after classic brawl. Rooms were demolished to kindling (particularly in the classic battle in the final chapter between Sharpe and Tom Steele.)

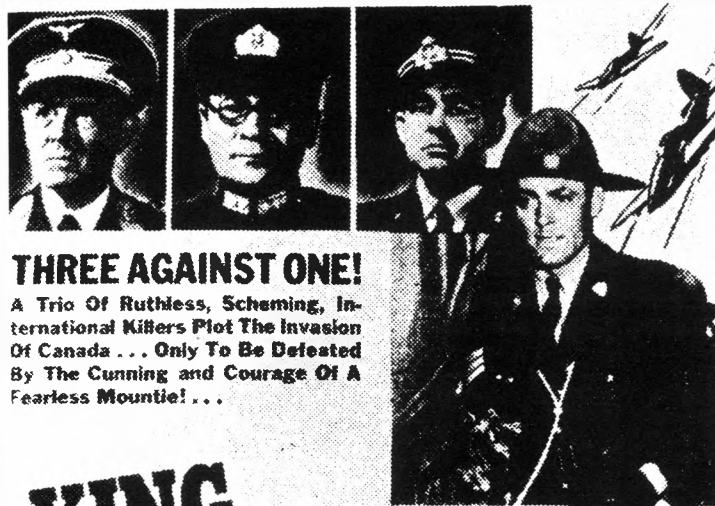
DC's 'Batman' got into the act in the 1943 chapter-play, but the results when viewed today are far from hyper-

thrilling. Pitting the caped crusader and his young sidekick Robin against a sabotage gang led by sinister Japanese agent Dr. Daka (played with delicious campy evil by J. Carrol Naish) may have seemed like a good idea at the time, but Columbia's work on the 15 chapter serial was way below the standards of Republic. Lewis Wilson (in what turned out to be his first and last film) wasn't a bad Bruce Wayne and threw himself into the Batman part, while Douglas Croft was a properly youthful Dick Grayson-Robin. But somehow the costumes almost ruined the visual image most youngsters had of what Batman should look like, the Batman suit reminding one more of a revamped Devil's outfit (although it must be noted, it was more effective than the outfit worn by Robert Lowery in the 1949 Katzman epic 'New Adventures of Batman & Robin' where Lowery's cowl seemed to resemble a demented vulture more than anything else). Sometimes one wondered how Batman and Robin managed to come out alive from most of the perils they were faced with — other times you knew it was sheer dumb luck, like Batman falling unhurt onto a painter's scaffold after it seemed he had falled about 120 stores from a building rooftop. The stunting ranged from some good moments to dreadful, with the stuntman doubling Batman almost losing his cowl a couple of times.

Universal's entries into the comic-strip spy fighting field began with Frank V. Martinek's creation Commndr. Don Winslow of the U.S. Navy. Two chapter plays appeared in 1942 and '43 of 12 and 13 episodes respectively with Don Terry and Walter Sande as Winslow and his sidekick Lt. Red Pennington. 'Don Winslow of the Navy' had Winslow and Red clashing with a master saboteur called The Scorpion, whose agents were attempting to stop construction of a naval base on an island in the Pacific.



**Kane Richmond (Spy Smasher) and Marguerite Chapman as Eve. John Dale doubles for Richmond as Jack.**

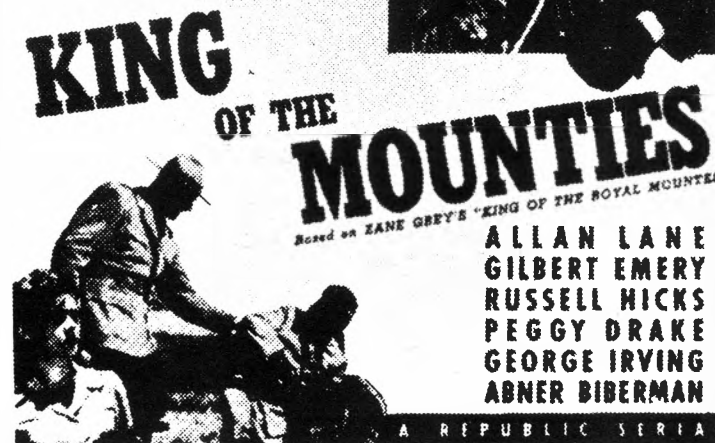


### THREE AGAINST ONE!

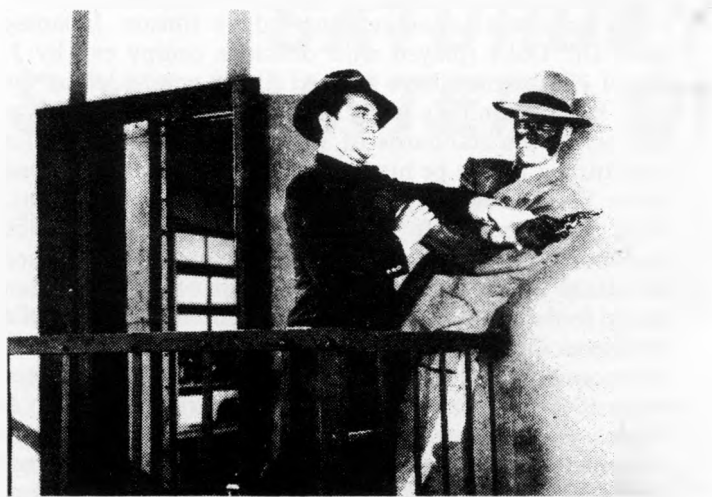
A Trio Of Ruthless, Scheming, International Killers Plot The Invasion Of Canada ... Only To Be Defeated By The Cunning and Courage Of A Fearless Mountie! ...



**Black Commando (Paul Kelly) has Eddie Parker and Trevor Bardette in "The Secret Code."**



**King of the Mounties.**



**Anthony Warde (soon to be interviewed in *Serial World*) battles Tom Steele in "*The Masked Marvel*."**



**Rod Cameron dons an axis uniform to catch spies in this scene from "*Secret Service in Darkest Africa*."**



**Johnny Arthur as Sakima and William Forrest as Crane plot to capture "*The Masked Marvel*."**

Only visible as a sinister face on a television screen, the Scorpion, played with nasty relish by Kurt Katch (in the brief times he appeared), would snarl out orders and punish those who bungled orders, such as one hapless agent who was ordered to sit in the driver's seat of a 'human torpedo.'

'Don Winslow of the Coast Guard' saw Winslow and his sidekick loaned out by the Navy to help battle sabotage caused by the Scorpion and his fifth columnists. In the first film, the Scorpion's allegiance was unstated, but here, it was pretty clear. His chief aides were a Japanese sub commander (Philip Ahn), several Nazi agents, an exotic aide (Tasmia, played by June Duprez, the princess in the Sabu-Conrad Veidt 'Thief of Bagdad') and assorted Facist and gangster henchmen. For good measure, a squad of Japanese soldiers were thrown in on an off-coast island. Nestor Paive took over the role of the Scorpion from Kurt Katch and was properly malevolent.

Zack Mosley's popular high-flyer, 'Smilin' Jack was the hero of Universal's 'Adventures of Smilin' Jack' with Tom Brown cast as the comic-strip ace, with Marjorie Lord and Edgar Barrier to help, Brown battled Japanese spies for 13 episodes to obtain the secret of a secret road existing between China and India. The serial sort of straddled the time period fence, beginning just before Pearl Harbor and continuing on with America's involvement in the war after chapter 8. A fairly strong supporting cast backed up the three heroes including Sidney Toler and Key Luke on the side of the good guys, while Rose Hobart and Turhan Bey led the Japanese agents.

Alex Raymond's 'Secret Agent X-9' (A.K.A. Phil Corrigan) had a whole island to himself in which to battle the enemy, a locale known as Shadow Island, outside U.S. territorial waters, privately owned by gangster Lucky Kamber as a neutral, hideout for the fugitives on the lam. X-9, trying to stop Axis agents from learning the secret of 722, an explosive formula that created an excellent aviation gas substitution when mixed with distilled water, found himself up to his neck in plot twists including intrigue among Kamber and the Japanese agents, a mysterious man known only on notes as 'The Man With The Secret,' and a plot to send a double for an explosives expert to the U.S. to steal the 722 formula. Lloyd Bridges played X-9, while Jan Wiley and Key Luke aided him as Australian and Chinese secret agents. Victoria Horne was Nabura, the spy chief, and Cy Kendall was Kamber. Samuel S. Hinds was around as one of Kamber's employees who was more than he seemed — with a penchant for tiddly-winks.

In the non-comic strip area, things were a little more crowded. Universal tried to get to younger audiences through the Dead End Kids, apparently reasoning that the kids would identify with the group of screen tough guys (and possibly help boost serial sales). Three 12 episode adventures were turned out in 1940 to 1942 with the gang (Billy Halop — still the leader, Huntz Hall, Gabriel Dell and Bernard Punsley at the core) battling enemies of America every time. Other young players were added to the roster as 'The Little Tough Guys' sharing billing in the adventures.

'Jr. G-Men' and 'Sea Raiders' were more of the 'preparedness — they're the rats but we can't identify them' category. The first had the youngsters coping with a subversive group called The Order of the Flaming Torch, which had been making off with various military and scientific personnel. Young Halop's father is one of those

kidnapped for a new explosive he has invented. The kids get mixed up with FBI agent Phillip Terry and soon begin working with a group of kids called the Junior G-Men.

'Sea Raiders' really rambled around with the youngsters trying to cope with fifth columnists who have stolen a new type of torpedo boat invented by Halop's brother. In trying to track down the subversives (in reality a 'patriotic' millionaire and several heavies using a yacht as their headquarters), the youngsters not only get themselves under suspicion of being involved with the enemy, but soon end up shanghaied on a whaler, and marooned on an island which just happens to be the enemies' headquarters. The kids were the same, with the good guys represented by William Hall as a toughguy harbor patrolman, John McGuire, Mary Field and Marcia Ralston. The heavies included Reed Hadley as one of the lead saboteurs and including veterans Stanley Blystone, Richard Alexander and Ernie Adams among the 'fivers.'

'Junior G-Men of the Air' called the nationalities all the way with the kids taking on a Japanese spy ring known as the 'Black Dragonflies' (Dragons hadn't matured by then, apparently) led by horror menace Lionel Atwill, in full Japanese makeup, assisted by soon-to-be film heartthrob Turhan Bey. The object of the enemies' intentions was a new airplane muffler invented by Halop's brother (again!). This one had some pretty good moments with the enemy headquarters in a produce farm outside the city. Aiding the side of law and order were Frank Albertson as the head of the Junior G-Men and Dick Lane as the local FBI chief.

Halop's spy-fighting activities weren't over yet as Universal put him in 'Sky Raiders' along with Donald Woods, Robert Armstrong and Kathryn Adams. Woods starred as Capt. Bob Dayton, famed aviator, who becomes the target of the enemy (unnamed again) due to a new type of fighter plane his company has made. The heavies were led by Eduardo Cianelli (with the name of Felix Lynx), aided by Jacqueline Dayla and Reed Hadley.

'Adventures of the Flying Cadets' (1943) had Johnny Downs taking time off from musicals to join Ward Wood, Black Hangman to you), who in turned turned out to be 'patriotic' engineer Robert Armstrong. Eduardo Cianelli whole serial to clear themselves on complicity in murders committed by enemy agent Der Schwarze Hanker (The Black Hangman to you), who in turned out to be 'patriotic' engineer Robert Armstrong. Eduardo Cianelli was the rotten Gestapo agent, while Jennifer Holt, Regis Toomey and Ian Keith were among those involved in the hunt for the lost caves of An-Kar-Ban which contained a valuable deposit of Helium. Like 'Sea Raiders,' 'Flying Cadets' kept moving around too, leaping from America in Chapter 4 to Africa.

Columbia tried their hand at straight spy-actioners with 'The Secret Code,' which is said to be one of their better chapter-plays. With Spencer G. Bennet at the helm, 'Code' starred character actor Paul Kelly as a cop who set out to trap a gang of Axis saboteurs in the guise of the Black Commando. Anne Nagel was his girl, while Clancy Cooper played Kelly's buddy. The heavies were an unusually top-drawer group of actors; Trevor Bardette, Robert O. Davis, Gregory Gay and Louis (later Ludwig) Donath. Besides the 15 episodes of action, 'Secret Code' had a special gimmick — at the end of each chapter, the audience was given a brief lesson in coding and de-coding.

The Master Key pitted Milburn Stone, Jan Wiley and Dennis Moore against fifth columnists bossed by Addison Richards. Aided by a group of street kids, led by a young



**Paul Fung is about to stick our Indian friend in a scene from "King of the Mounties."**

★★★★★★



**"Junior G-Men of the Air." Feature Dick Lane (who now works with Jeff Walton) and Billy Halop, Frank Albertson, Paul Phillips and Frederick Burton.**

★★★★★★



**Art work from "Masked Marvel," one of the world's best chapter plays during the war years.**



Al LaRue (later to be known as Lash LaRue), the web of the FBI tightened on the saboteurs with the unmasking of the Master Key really an unexpected revelation.

Milburn Stone joined Ralph Morgan, Marjorie Weaver, Edgar Kennedy and Fuzzy Knight to solve the 'Great Alaskan Mystery, complete with death-ray and Nazi spies led by Samuel S. Hinds, Martin Kosleck and Anthony Warde.

'Jungle Queen' presented Ruth Roman as a 'goddess' in white robes whose big trick was walking through fire unscathed (except for some possibly scorched feet). Her task was to help heroes Edward Norris, Eddie Quillan and Lois Collier battle Nazi agents Douglas Dumbrille and Tala Birell in what apparently was a bit of a jungle loser that relied on stock footage for some of the cliff-hangers.

Perhaps the best of the serial spy epics were those put out by Republic. I've already mentioned the comic strip adaptations, but there were others that kept audiences jumping during the early 40s.

'King of the Texas Rangers' led the group, but was more of a 'preparedness' adventure. Sammy Baugh, the football hero, was cast as Tom King, whose father, a Texas Ranger, was murdered by enemy agents, led by Neil Hamilton. Becoming a Ranger himself, young King soon joined forces with an agent of the Mexican Rurales (Duncan Renaldo) and his newspaper publisher girlfriend (Pauline Moore) to bring the enemy to justice. A particularly interesting gimmick was the use of an armor plated zeppelin for the enemy headquarters of the big spy chief, known as His Excellency (Robert O. Davis). Other heavies included Roy Barcroft, Kenne Duncan, Jack Ingram, Robert Barron and Bud Geary.

'G-Men Vs. The Black Dragon' had Rod Cameron in the only continuing non-comic strip role in Republic's serial output, Rex Bennett of the Secret Service. Crammed with action, 'Black Dragon' was one of the many 40s adventures that moved like runaway express train, with fights, chases and cliff-hangers popping up at the drop of a hat. Battling with Cameron against the sinister Black Dragon were Constance Worth as a British agent and Roland Got as a member of the Chinese Secret Service. The master spy was Nino Peppitone, while henchmen included George J. Lewis and Noel Cravat. Here the villains were truly hissable with none of them above shooting, killing, strangling and stabbing anyone in their way.

'Secret Service In Darkest Africa' had Bennett pop up in Casablanca to stop Axis agents led by Baron Von Romler (played with thorough nastiness by Lionel Royce) who was an exact double for a Moslem leader, whose place he had taken while keeping the real official chained up in a secret dungeon. Joan Marsh and Duncan Renaldo joined Cameron on the side of Democracy while Kurt Kruger and Frederic Brunn (one of the shortest serial meanies for this type of actioner; he may have been small, but he sure was mean!) were Royce's chief aides. Almost every chapter had two or three super-brawls interspersed in the action while the screenplay gave audiences additional ideas as to what kind of s.o.b.'s the Nazi spies were. One incident which occurred with regularity was that one of the enemy agents would get angry at the real shiek (who didn't help matters by needling his captives) and a game of 'slug the shiek' would occur at every opportunity.

'The Masked Marvel' is regarded by many to be Republic's super-spy catcher epic after 'Spy Smasher.' Especially tailored for the talents of stunt-ace Tom Steele, the 'Marvel' was crammed with action, chases, those Lydecker super-explosions and effects and a gimmick utilized effectively in the 'Lone Ranger.' One of four government investigators was really the Marvel. The audience and the enemy had to guess his true identity (which was not that difficult — all one had to do was look for the agent who resembled Tom Steele). As the serial progressed through its 12 episodes, the four suspects were killed off until two choices remained.

What added to the incredible fun of this epic was the use of almost every B-picture character player and heavy on the lot at the time. You might see Roy Barcroft, Harry Woods or even Edward Van Sloan pop up at a moments notice in a cameo. Stunt-men villains were killed off in one episode and then popped up in a new identity in a later chapter (Lazarus had nothing on these daredevils). The pace never lagged with the bulk of the fights real room-wreckers (sometimes three brawls took place at the same time!).

The four 'Masked Marvel' suspects included Ron Bacon, Richard Clarke, David Bacon and Bill Healy. Louise Currie made her second serial appearance as the heroine and received her share of lumps in the goings on. As the main heavy of the piece, Johnny Arthur, known for his roles as hyper-nervous comedy types, was a strange piece of casting as Sakima. He gave it everything he had, but his attempt at an Oriental-sounding voice, coupled with his familiarity to film audiences worked against him. William Forrest got top billing in the serial as a thoroughly hypocritical quisling, while Anthony Warde proved once again that he was one of the action pictures' best screen meanies along with Barcroft, Kenne Duncan and Jack Ingram, among others.

With the end of the war, B-pictures and serials lost probably the best real-life heavies they could ever hope to find in the Axis forces. Incidental adventures with Axis heavies popped up for a year or two, but new menaces had to be found. Enemies from mythical foreign powers, visitors from space and gangsters seemed to take over. The next batch of spy-villains would come when everyone was seeing Red under their bedsheets. Their villainy was fairly nasty as well on the screen, but somehow, it was a pale shadow compared to the all-out ruthlessness of the World War II heavies. They provided the basis for some of the best action-packed chapter-plays to come out of film studios in a time when a true-life horror made the menace on the screen look tame by comparison.

(In this article, I have only attempted to give a brief idea of those serials that dealt with W.W. II — in future issues of 'Serial World' more extensive coverage will be given many of these titles)

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\* **Coming in Serial World No. 2** \*  
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\* *Our Superman Serial Saga begins* \*  
\* *Interview with John Hart and Harry Lauter* \*  
\* *Serials and the B-Western stars* \*  
\* *How the Serials rate rare stills and more.* \*  
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# REEL BOOKS

A BOOK REVIEW COLUMN  
BY JIM HITT

**REAL STARS NO. 2**, edited by Leonard Maltin. Curtis Books, \$1.50

Early in 1973 Curtis Books began publishing a series devoted to films, the first of which was **REAL STARS**, edited by Leonard Maltin, a lively little book dealing with character actors. Since then Curtis has followed with such entries as **B MOVIES**, **KARLOFF**, and others, most of which have proven to be enjoyable and sometimes useful.

Now Curtis has published a companion volume to **REAL STARS**, titled **REAL STARS NO. 2**, also edited by Maltin, and it has some exciting entries for serial fans which the first book lacked. **REAL STARS NO. 2** gives us biographies of three actors associated with serials, Lionel Atwill, Roy Barcroft, and Keye Luke.

In both books the format has been to give a brief biography of each actor followed by a more or less extensive filmography. Most of these entries are articles which appeared in **FILM MONTHLY** or **SCREEN FACTS**.

Each biography is handled by a different author. Perhaps the most interesting single article is that on Roy Barcroft, written by Alan Barbour. Barbour is, of course, the author of that excellent book on serials, **DAYS OF THRILLS AND ADVENTURE**.

Barbour has a pleasant style that is easily readable, as are most of the people who contributed to this book.

An interesting contrast arises between Barcroft and Lionel Atwill. Barcroft enjoyed working in serials, and he listed one of them. **MANHUNT ON MYSTERY ISLAND**, among his favorite roles. Atwill, on the other hand, ended his career playing in a serial, **LOST CITY OF THE JUNGLE**, the last of four in which he appeared. To Atwill serials were a step down in his career. Barcroft played in over 25 of the cliffhangers.

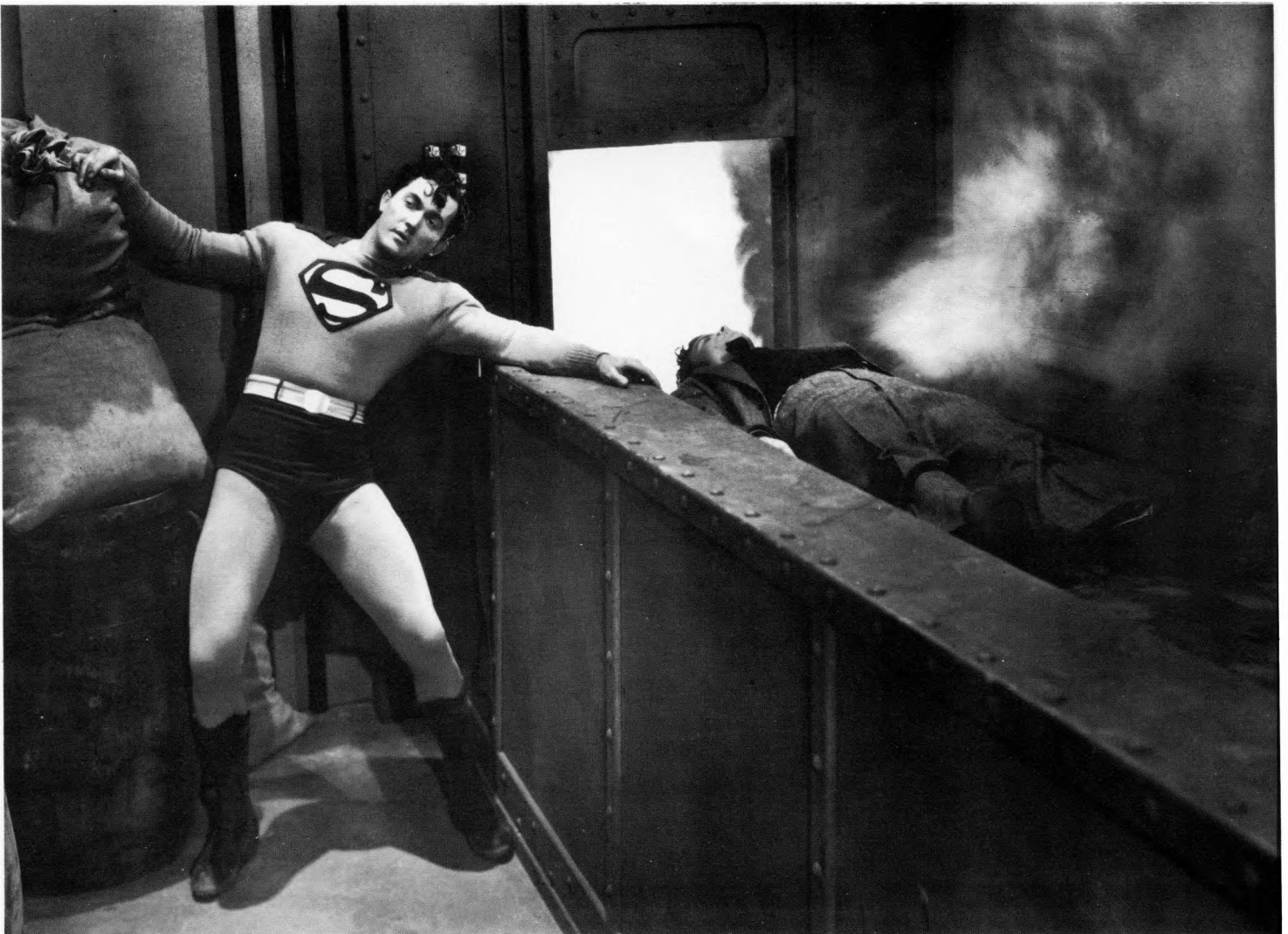
Keye Luke, besides playing in many Charlie Chan features, played in five serials, the most famous being the two Green Hornet entries.

There are also goodies here for B western fans. Smiley Burnette, Gabby Hayes, and Max Terhune are covered, although in comparison to some others, they are given a short shift. For instance the one serial in which Smiley Burnette appeared, **DICK TRACY**, is not mentioned in either the biography or filmography.

There are other actors and actresses covered in this book who will also be of interest to fans of B films, even if they never appeared in serials, people such as Iris Adrian, Nat Pendleton, and Raymond Wilburn, to name but three.

Despite the pocket book format, the stills are not only well chose but very clearly reproduced.

Even though the price of paperbound books is often outrageously high, \$1.50 seems a small price to pay for as much enjoyment as this book provides. **REAL STARS NO. 2** is a real bargain.



**The Saga of "Superman" in the serials will begin in the next thrilling issue of SERIAL WORLD.** © National Periodicals.





# KING OF THE ROCKET MEN

TRISTRAM COFFIN • MAE CLARKE  
HOUSE PETERS, JR. • DON HAGGERTY  
I. STANFORD JOLLEY  
A REPUBLIC SERIAL IN 12 CHAPTERS

Directed by FRED BRANNON  
WRITTEN BY ROYAL COLE • WILLIAM LIVELY • SOL SHOR

Chapter 1. DR. VULCAN—TRAITOR